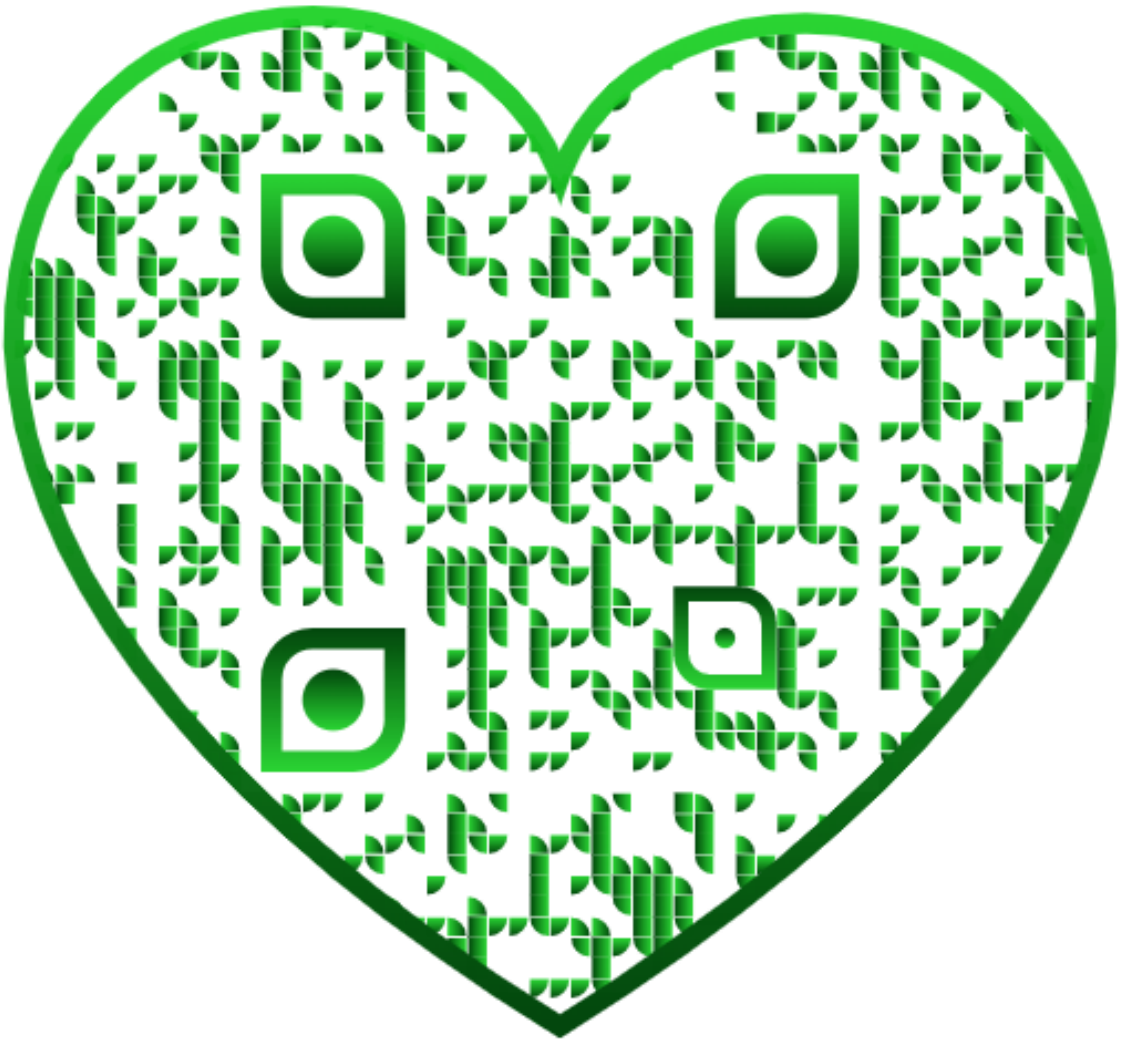
An Atheist in Heaven

The Ultimate Evidence for Life After Death?

Paul Davids and Gary E. Schwartz, Ph.D.
with John Allison, Ph.D.



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Paul J. Davids and Gary E. Schwartz, Ph.D.

Contributions from John Allison, Ph.D.

Yellow Hat Publishing, a Division of Yellow Hat Productions, Inc.

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www.atheistinheaven.com
www.lifeafterdeathproject.com

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The cover image of Forrest Ackerman is adapted from the L. J. Dopp painting, "Blue Forry" (2004), which first appeared as the cover of the DVD of *The Life After Death Project* from Yellow Hat Productions, Inc.

An itemized list of over 140 anomalies connected with the Forrest J Ackerman "After Death Communication Case" and related phenomena discussed in this book is included as an Addendum, as Chapter 27. There are chapter references to each anomaly.

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In the 1993 *Star Wars* book, *Prophets of the Dark Side*, I wrote the following dedication:

To Forrest J Ackerman (Mr. Sci-Fi),
Creator and editor of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine.
Thanks for raising us on such a robust diet of primordial beasts
and automated robots, so we were ready to fasten our space belts
when George Lucas pointed the way to the stars.

23 years have gone by since I wrote those words. Forry, you died in December, 2008, at the age of 92. As with *Prophets of the Dark Side*, I dedicate *An Atheist in Heaven* to you. You were the atheist. However, when you passed, strange things began happening that made me feel you were not far away. Scientists have tried to explain these phenomena, and they have not found answers…

Paul Davids

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the contributions of many people who helped us, both in the writing and research. To our two chemists, Dr. Jay Siegel and also to Dr. John Allison, who contributed writing and editing, we are indebted for your contributions to the research and analyzing the data. We thank Jack Kelleher, who wrote a chapter – and Ian Paul Johnston, who also contributed editorially.

The seven gifted mediums (Catherine Yunt, Orit Ish Yemeni Tomer, Glennys MacKay, Lisa Marie, Molly, Susanne Wilson and Jamie Clark) connected for us with realms we can scarcely comprehend. We also thank Russell Maynor, Joe Moe, Sean and Silke Fernald, Richard Matheson, Bob Rotstan, Scot Johnson, Greg Bishop, Stanislav O'Jack, Deborah Painter, Ron Waite, Mark Rollings, the Steklis family, Phyllis Galde, Rosemary Guiley, Mark Macy, L. J. Dopp, Julie Dwyer Brody, Paola Harris, and our patient and collaborative wives: Hollace Davids and Rhonda Eklund Schwartz. All these people dedicated themselves to helping with this work and participating where circumstances enabled them to be a part of the quest. We thank Dr. Michael Shermer, who surprised us greatly with his *Scientific American* article about a skeptic's assumptions being shaken to the very core. To these names, we add all those who were part of the film *The Life After Death Project* who are listed in the credits, and in so doing, enabled this book to take shape. We also thank the late Anne Strieber, wife of author Whitley Strieber, who believed in a life hereafter – and who introduced the authors of this book to one another.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge Professor Charles Tart, Ph.D., the distinguished research psychologist and author of many books, including *The End of Materialism: How Evidence of the Paranormal is Bringing Science and Spirit Together*. It was Charley (as he is known fondly to his friends and colleagues) who challenged and inspired us to embark on the (very) time consuming process of writing this fact-filled book. Charley felt the documentary film, *The Life After Death Project*, was important and highly interesting but not sufficient to encompass fully this complex and substantive case for an evidence-based mind. For that, a book was necessary, and this is the result.

Preface: Atheists and Heaven?

by Gary E. Schwartz, Ph.D.

I can see how it might be possible for
a man to look down upon the earth and
be an atheist, but I cannot conceive
how a man could look up into the
heavens and say there is no God.

Abraham Lincoln

If you really believe that death leads to *eternal bliss*,
then why are you wearing a seatbelt?

Doug Stanhope [Stanhope's italics]

Atheists and heaven? Seems like a contradiction in terms, yes?

As a general rule, people who believe there is no God also believe that there is no such thing as heaven or an afterlife. The brilliant scientist Stephen Hawking states this quite succinctly:

"I believe the simplest explanation is, there is no God. No one created the

universe and no one directs our fate. This leads me to a profound realization that there probably is no heaven and no afterlife either. We have this one life to appreciate the grand design of the universe, and for that, I am extremely grateful."

Forrest J Ackerman was a lifelong atheist. He did not believe there is a God. He did not believe there is a heaven. He did not believe there is an afterlife. He did not believe humans have spirits or souls.

Yes, like Doug Stanhope in the quote above, Forrest (or Forry as he was usually known) wore a seatbelt, and he did so proudly. In spite of his firm opinions about what he would stake his life on (the steak or meat of existence) and what was baloney (the bunk of fiction in tall tales and short stories about ghosts and vengeful spirits), and though he was quite science-minded, Forry realized that science, and even logic, were sometimes wrong.

As you will read, Forry left a little bit of space in his mind for the door of doubt to remain open, and he promised some of his favorite people – including Paul Davids – that when he died, if he woke up to some big convention in the sky and discovered he had been wrong about life after death (which he sincerely doubted would ever happen), then he would drop a line if he could. In life he sent special delivery letters, which he called spacial delivery letters because he was a major proponent of space travel. What kind of notification would he send from the so-called "Other Side" – if it turned out he could confirm such a thing is not delusion or fiction? You will soon learn about this, and the evidence indicates that he has done so many times. He was a man who always called a spade a spade, and since he died in 2008, he has been letting some people know, in spades, that he is still around, although they cannot physically see him.

As this book documents, there is overwhelming evidence that not only was Forry wrong about the afterlife, but all indications are that following his death he is having the time of his life. He is doing things that he long thought were impossible. Forrest J Ackerman's continued creativity and playfulness strongly suggest that he has been having one hell of a good time – and that this current adventure is heavenly for him.

Concepts like God, heaven, afterlife, spirit and soul may seem simple on the surface, but they are actually quite complex. Consider this statement from Albert Einstein, arguably humanity's most brilliant scientist:

"I cannot imagine a God who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation, whose purposes are modeled after our own – a God, in short, who is but a reflection of human frailty. Neither can I believe that the individual survives the death of his body, although feeble souls harbor such thoughts through fear or

ridiculous egotisms."

There are two key points worth pondering here:

First, Einstein fervently believed in God (though this quote does not make that fact clear), and yet he did not believe in life after death. Einstein was not an atheist, yet he still disbelieved in life after death.

One of my favorite quotes was when Einstein was asked if he believed in immortality. He said "No, and one life is enough for me."

When Einstein was physically among us, he looked down upon people who believed in an afterlife. Einstein could be quite caustic and arrogant at times. He said such people were "feeble souls" – which is funny, since he did not believe that people had souls – and that they harbored such thoughts through "fear" or "ridiculous egotisms."

The problem with this statement is that Einstein's beliefs are not consistent with the facts. As a 21st century scientist investigating the nature of consciousness, people who know me do not label me as "feeble," and they know that I do not harbor these thoughts through fear or ridiculous egotisms. I harbor these thoughts because of the evidence conducted in research laboratories as well as the laboratory of real life. The same facts apply to many other contemporary scientists working in this controversial area.

I find it most amusing, and you may as well, that some of the strongest evidence for life beyond death comes from a lifelong atheist who believed that there is no God or heaven, and he changed his mind after he died.

For the record, based on the evidence reported in this book associated with Forrest J Ackerman (and other post-physical persons), I have come to the "evidence-based" conclusion that people like Einstein and Hawking are mistaken about the non-existence of an afterlife.

At the same time, and for the record, I always wear a seatbelt. So too do most genuine mediums (as well as fake mediums) whom I know. Having extensive knowledge about the reality of life after death and the "heaven hypothesis" (discussed shortly) does not mean that we should be stupid and risk damaging or destroying our physical bodies while we have them. Spiritual people are not the only people who sometimes say stupid things; atheists do so too. We all need to learn humility, especially when it comes to such deep questions as the existence of life after death and heaven.

What is Heaven?

Heaven is an exceptionally complex and emotionally laden word. Many people have very strong opinions about what heaven is, and their opinions vary tremendously. Just as some people believe that God is an angry old white man with a beard and a cane (a stereotyped Old Testament view of God), some people believe that heaven is a blissful place in the sky where God sits on a pearly throne (a stereotyped New Testament view of heaven). Just as ideas about God are hugely different across (and within) religious traditions, so too are ideas about heaven. Hindus, Jews, Buddhists, Catholics, Protestants, Fundamentalists, Mormons, Muslims, Baha'is, Jains – the different ideas about heaven often hide many of their underlying similarities.

Some people believe that heaven is a single place; other people believe that heaven is hierarchical with many levels containing different kinds of spiritual beings. There are many different "Heaven Hypotheses."

It used to be that people had to base their beliefs on the mystics and clerics of their respective religions. However, today there is mounting evidence that people who have had documented near death experiences (NDEs) often report having experiences which include some of the commonalities connecting the diverse ideas about heaven. For example, the majority of people having NDEs report experiencing brilliant light, deep love, being greeted by deceased loved ones and other people, *etc.*

Moreover, today there is mounting evidence from after death communication (ADC) research as well as laboratory research with genuine mediums (as this book documents, not all mediums are fakes), that "spirits" (a term used by mediums and spiritual people) or "discarnates" (the term scientists prefer) can choose to "travel" between "heaven" and "earth." Although the spirits/discarnate entities now live "on the Other Side," they can choose how much time they spend "upstairs" or "downstairs."

Many spiritual mediums today use words or terms such as "afterlife," "Other Side," "upstairs," "higher dimensions," and "heaven" as synonyms. These words are used loosely; they are not defined precisely.

You may be wondering, if the word heaven can mean so many different things, how are we, the authors of this book, using the word? We are not using it in any specific religious way. We are using the word "heaven" in its more abstract, generic and spiritual meaning – a "higher place" of existence that is typically more loving, joyful and peaceful than what we experience on the earth. Notice that this definition does not specify level or judgment or divinity. It leaves specifics open. In doing so, it honors our current scientific understanding of the existence of a higher/greater reality.

The totality of the evidence indicates that it doesn't matter whether you believe in God or you are an atheist. After you die, you discover you are still alive and great adventures await you.

Also, the totality of the evidence indicates that it doesn't matter whether you believe in life after death or not. It makes no difference. After you die, you discover you are still alive and great adventures await you.

And finally, the totality of the evidence indicates that it doesn't matter whether you believe in heaven or not. Once again: after you die, you discover you are still alive and great adventures await you.

At the same time, the evidence indicates that the more open-minded and adventurous you are in general, the more creative and richer your adventures are after you get to the Other Side. In some respects, Forry is the poster child for the lifelong atheist who discovered he was wrong and set his mission to awaken not only the special people in his life, but humanity in general. If any visionary disbeliever can awaken us to the reality of an evidence-based heaven, it is Forry.

It is time to buckle your seatbelts, but slow down a moment and take few deep breaths, because we won't be blasting off until you've been properly warned. So imagine me speaking to you in my most serious voice – and it can sound stern when I set my playful nature in the storage compartment and get behind the pilot's controls. And please pay very close attention to this warning, which I might as well post in bold type and capital letters, while I'm at it, just to be certain that I have your undivided attention:

WARNING – THE BOOK YOU ARE ABOUT TO READ IS ABSOLUTELY TRUE.

This may sound like an odd warning, and I can state for a fact that I have never read (or written) such a warning before. However, in this instance, the warning is advisable and completely justified.

What you are about to read is factually true, historically accurate, and should be taken very seriously.

Though at times what you are about to read may sound like a combination of science and literary fiction, and it will stretch your imagination and credulity far beyond where most of us ever go, it really happened – and even continues today.

How do I know this to be true? You will soon learn that answer, but please be aware that at the outset, I was initially concerned that Paul Davids' accounts

might be sham, or at least seriously distorted. In the coming chapters, those accounts are about to take you on one of the strangest journeys since Lewis Carroll invented Wonderland. This "Wonderland" really exists, and in insisting on that, I assure you I have not been duped. I absolutely cannot afford to be duped, and I will not tolerate for one minute ever being duped.

Permit me to explain.

First, I am a serious scientist, Harvard educated, a former professor at Harvard and Yale, and a professor in five departments at the University of Arizona.

This history does not mean that I can't be duped, but it does imply that I am highly-educated and I have a scientific reputation to protect.

Second, I take very great care not to be duped. For example, when I began researching the possibility that not all mediums – people who claim to communicate with the deceased – are frauds, I did not want to be fooled. I knew much about Harry Houdini and revered him and his historic efforts to protect the public against fake mediums.

I knew there are fake mediums practicing today. In order to get at the truth, I decided the only way not to be deceived was to learn how to become a deceiver myself. I consulted with some of the best "psychic entertainers" in the world.

I purchased and read secret books on how to be a fake medium. I took a course in how to be a fake medium. In fact, I am a pretty good fake medium. Hence, I know what the tricks are, and I designed even more fool-proof experiments to obviate any and all techniques used by charlatans and psychic entertainers.

Third, I know not to trust magicians, at least "blindly." Conjurers are in the business of fooling us, and the good ones do so really well. In fact, the great ones are so good that they can even fool their peers. I knew that Paul Davids is not only highly-educated and steeped in science fiction (he and his wife, Hollace, have co-authored six of the *Star Wars* sequel books for George Lucas), but he is well-versed in the art of magic as well. He is even a member of the esteemed Magic Castle in Los Angeles. My red flags were flying high.

Fourth, the motto of my various laboratories over twenty years at the University of Arizona has been "If it is real, it will be revealed, and if it is fake, we'll find the mistake." I recently wrote an academic book with Alan Bourey, my lawyer colleague, titled *Responsibility to Truth*, which integrates the best procedures used by law and science to improve the process of discovering facts and presenting them honestly. The purpose of science is not to promote illusions and myths, but to expose them in the process of discerning what is true. I take

this ethical responsibility very seriously.

And finally, because my research has taken me into ever more controversial areas, including having been awarded a $1.8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to create a "Center for Frontier Medicine in Biofield Science" (a center I directed for four years), I have a special responsibility to follow Professor Neal Miller's wise counsel. He was fond of saying that we must be "bold in what we try and cautious in what we claim."

In sum, I can't allow myself to be tricked by anyone – be they a purported medium, a successful writer and filmmaker claiming to have witnessed extraordinary events, or even a donor wishing to fund research in controversial areas.

So I warn them all – what I defend is data, and I do so vigorously. I tell them that if I determine through rigorous evaluation that what they are claiming is valid, I will defend the data and therefore their claims. I explain that if I discover that they have failed the tests we have mutually agreed are valid, I will stand by this data and report that they have failed. And I state that if I uncover that they have been cheating and attempting to deceive me and society, I will announce this data by publishing that they are liars.

This warns people right up front that they are taking a great risk with me if they cannot do what they claim they can do. Or worse, if they are attempting to fool me.

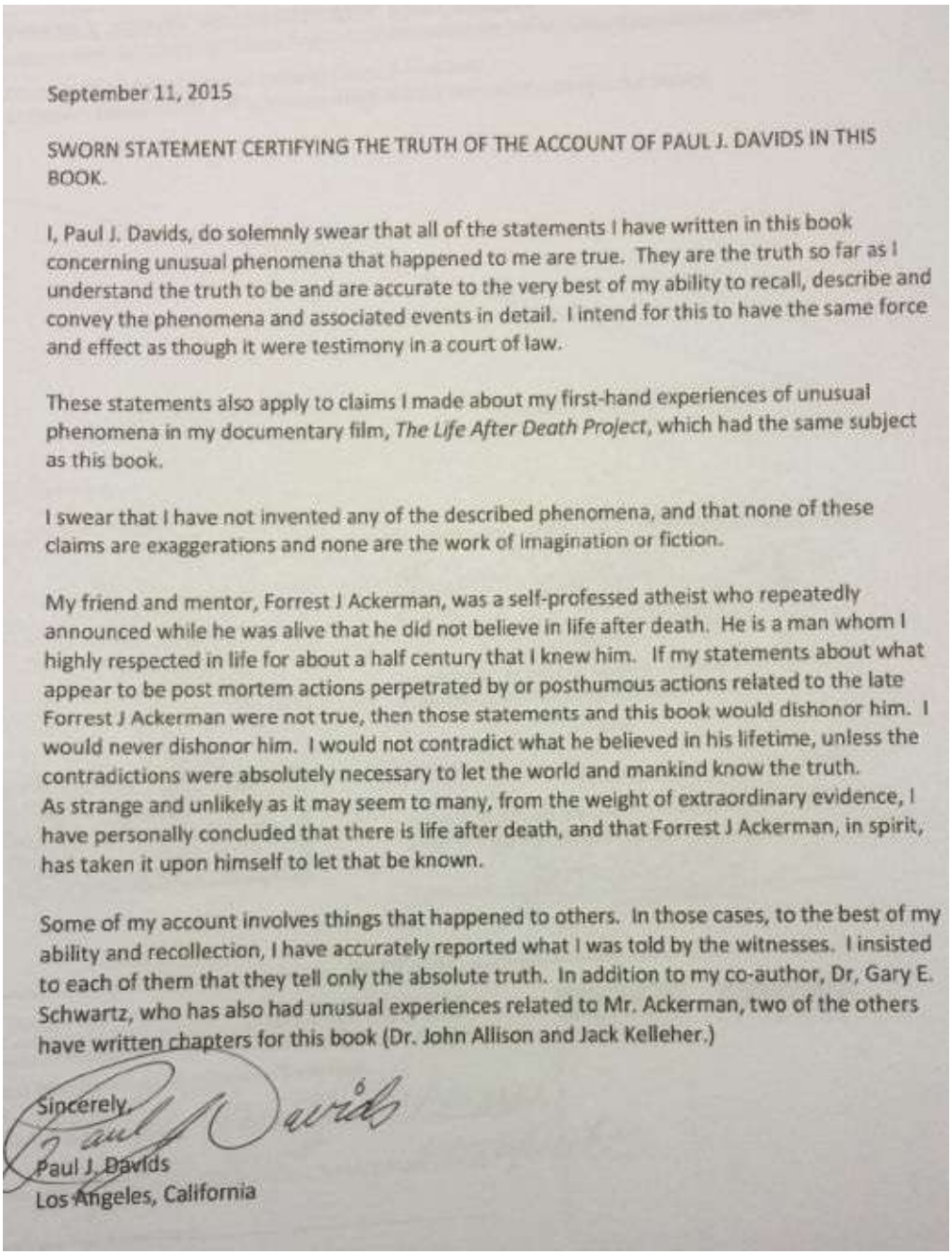
For the record, I warned Paul Davids about this even before he first came to interview me about what he was allegedly discovering, and I have continued to warn him in ever stronger language as this project unfolded. He decided, before this book has gone to press, to sign a sworn affidavit, certifying with the same strength of integrity as testimony in a court of law, that he has told the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth to the very best of his knowledge, ability and recollections. He swears that he has neither exaggerated nor invented nor fabricated anything. He brought all of this forward because he needed for the truth to be known, and soon you will know it.

So when I warn you that what you are about to read is actually true – a warning I have never given before – you can hopefully appreciate the sincerity with which I do so, and the sincerity with which Paul Davids accepts his responsibility for accuracy and integrity.

Having issued the warning, I now encourage you to enjoy and celebrate the magic you are about to read. This is "real life magic" – a genuine mystery filled with awe and wonder.

Gary E. Schwartz, Ph.D.

Gary E. Schwartz, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology, Medicine, Neurology, Psychiatry and Surgery
Director, Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health
The University of Arizona



September 11, 2015

SWORN STATEMENT CERTIFYING THE TRUTH OF THE ACCOUNT OF PAUL J. DAVIDS IN THIS BOOK.

I, Paul J. Davids, do solemnly swear that all of the statements I have written in this book concerning unusual phenomena that happened to me are true. They are the truth so far as I understand the truth to be and are accurate to the very best of my ability to recall, describe and convey the phenomena and associated events in detail. I intend for this to have the same force and effect as though it were testimony in a court of law.

These statements also apply to claims I made about my first-hand experiences of unusual phenomena in my documentary film, *The Life After Death Project*, which had the same subject as this book.

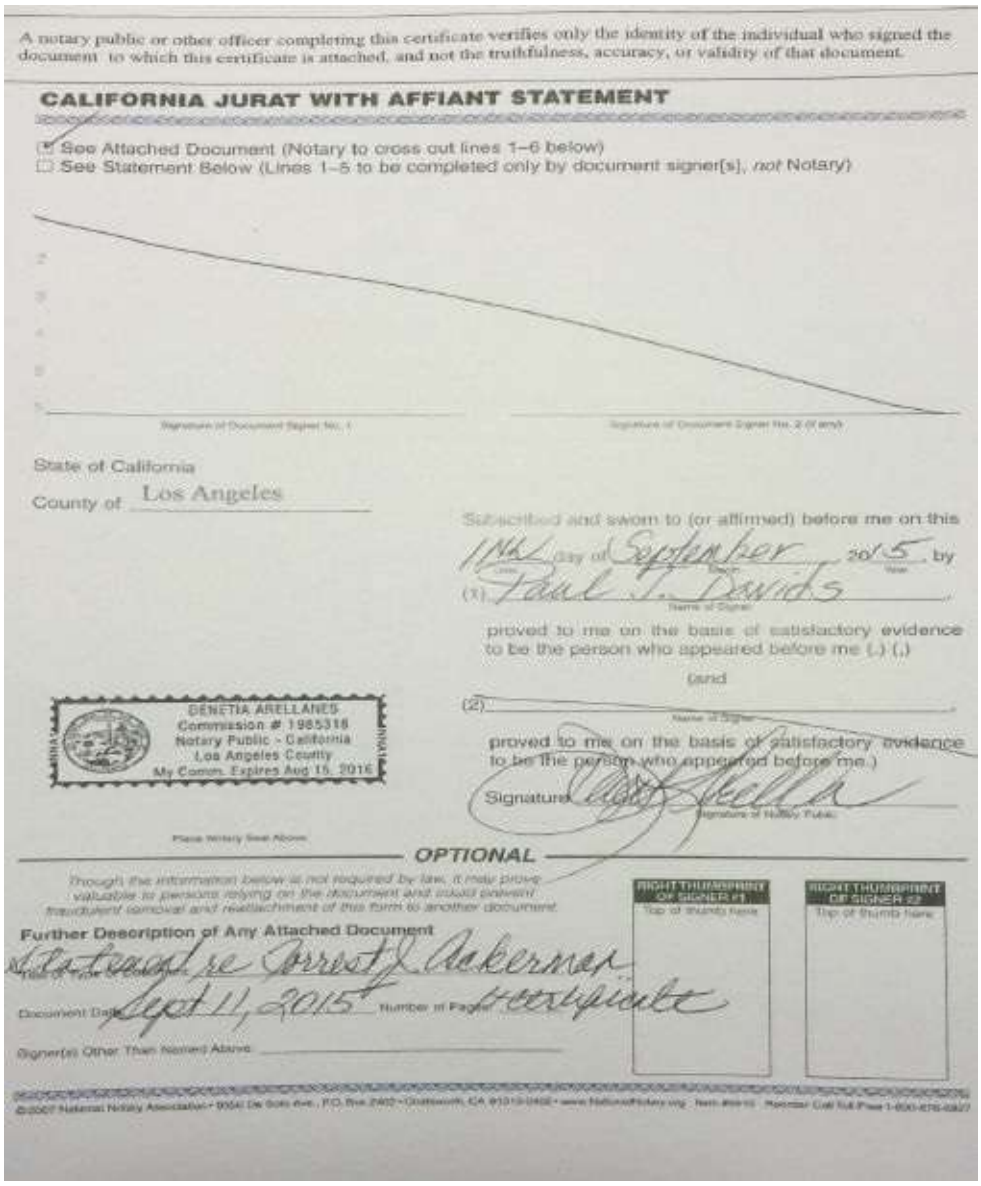
I swear that I have not invented any of the described phenomena, and that none of these claims are exaggerations and none are the work of imagination or fiction.

My friend and mentor, Forrest J Ackerman, was a self-professed atheist who repeatedly announced while he was alive that he did not believe in life after death. He is a man whom I highly respected in life for about a half century that I knew him. If my statements about what appear to be post mortem actions perpetrated by or posthumous actions related to the late Forrest J Ackerman were not true, then those statements and this book would dishonor him. I would never dishonor him. I would not contradict what he believed in his lifetime, unless the contradictions were absolutely necessary to let the world and mankind know the truth. As strange and unlikely as it may seem to many, from the weight of extraordinary evidence, I have personally concluded that there is life after death, and that Forrest J Ackerman, in spirit, has taken it upon himself to let that be known.

Some of my account involves things that happened to others. In those cases, to the best of my ability and recollection, I have accurately reported what I was told by the witnesses. I insisted to each of them that they tell only the absolute truth. In addition to my co-author, Dr, Gary E. Schwartz, who has also had unusual experiences related to Mr. Ackerman, two of the others have written chapters for this book (Dr. John Allison and Jack Kelleher.)

Sincerely,
Paul J. Davids
Los Angeles, California

Notarized Sworn Affidavit of Sept. 11, 2015, by Co-author Paul Davids.



A notary public or other officer completing this certificate verifies only the identity of the individual who signed the document to which this certificate is attached, and not the truthfulness, accuracy, or validity of that document.

CALIFORNIA JURAT WITH AFFIANT STATEMENT

☑ See Attached Document (Notary to cross out lines 1–6 below)
☐ See Statement Below (Lines 1–5 to be completed only by document signer[s], *not* Notary)

State of California
County of Los Angeles

Subscribed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me on this 11th day of September, 2015 by
(1) Paul J. Davids
proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person who appeared before me.) (,)
(and
(2)
proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person who appeared before me.)

DENETIA ARELLANES
Commission # 1985316
Notary Public - California
Los Angeles County
My Comm. Expires Aug 15, 2016

Signature

OPTIONAL

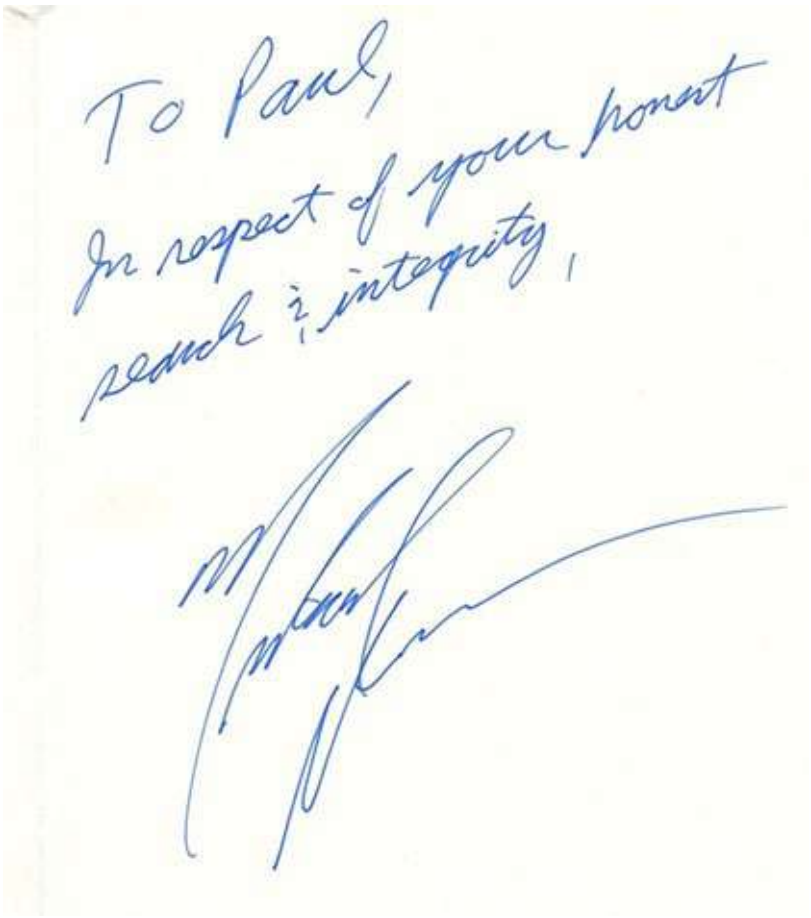
Though the information below is not required by law, it may prove valuable to persons relying on the document and could prevent fraudulent removal and reattachment of this form to another document.

Further Description of Any Attached Document

Title or Type of Document: Declaration re Forrest J Ackerman
Document Date: Sept 11, 2015 Number of Pages: Certificate
Signer(s) Other Than Named Above:

RIGHT THUMBPRINT OF SIGNER #1 Top of thumb here
RIGHT THUMBPRINT OF SIGNER #2 Top of thumb here

Notarized seal from Denetia Arellanes, referring to Paul Davids' sworn statement as "re Forrest J Ackerman."



An expression of respect for Paul Davids from one of the world's foremost skeptics, written as an inscription in Dr. Michael Shermer's book, The Believing Brain:

To Paul, In respect of your honest search and integrity,
Michael Shermer

Michael Shermer, Ph.D. is Executive Director of the Skeptics Society and the Founding Publisher of *Skeptic* magazine. The inscription was written after Dr. Shermer saw *The Life After Death Project*, Paul Davids' feature documentary that began the research on the extraordinary case of After Death Communication that is the central focus of *An Atheist in Heaven*.

Table of Contents

1. **HAVE YOU SEEN AN ELEPHANT FLY?**
2. **THE INKBLOT OBLITERATION**
3. **FORRY AND ME**
4. **THE CHEMICAL INQUIRY BEGINS**
5. **INVESTIGATING THE DOCUMENT**
6. **THE WIZARD OF WEIRD**
7. **SEAN ASKS FOR A SIGN**
8. **JACK AND THE MIR-ACK-ULOUS**
9. **THE MASK FROM ZIMBABWE**
10. **A LONG, WINDING ROAD TO TUCSON**
11. **MYSTERIES OF THE MISSING**
12. **THE MEDIUM HAS A MESSAGE**
13. **THE CRYPT AND LICENSE PLATES**
14. **MORE APPORTS AND POLTERGEIST MISCHIEF**
15. **INSTRUMENTAL TRANS-COMMUNICATION**
16. **VERY ODD ODDS-AND-ENDS**
17. **SOME PERSONAL RUMINATIONS**
18. **BREAKING NEWS – STOP THE PRESSES**
19. **CAN AN ATHEIST CHANGE HIS MIND (AFTER HE DIES)?**
20. **DOES SPIRIT ENDURE AFTER PHYSICAL DEATH?**
21. **WHEN AFTERLIFE RESEARCH SUPPORTS BELIEF**

22. WHEN CREDIBLE PEOPLE BELIEVE
23. HAVING DIRECT PERSONAL EXPERIENCES
24. RESPONSIBLE SKEPTICISM OF CRITERIA 1 - 4
25. IRRESPONSIBLE SKEPTICISM AND VERITAS
26. RETURN TO THE ACKERMANSION
27. ADDENDUM - LIST OF PHENOMENA

ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

INDEX

PART ONE

CHAPTERS 1 – 4 by Paul Davids

CHAPTER 5 by John Allison, Ph.D.

CHAPTERS 6 – 7 by Paul Davids

CHAPTER 8 by Jack Kelleher

CHAPTERS 9 – 18 by Paul Davids

“It ain’t what you don’t know that gets you into trouble.
It’s what you know for sure that just ain’t so.”

Mark Twain

1. HAVE YOU SEEN AN ELEPHANT FLY?

Here, present and accounted for – it's Paul J. Davids at the keyboard, and I'm the writer for this journey up until Chapter 5, which is Dr. John Allison's chapter called "Investigating the Document."

Since March of 2009, I have been intellectually and emotionally challenged by a series of seemingly inexplicable events that in many cases seem utterly impossible within the laws of physics for the world we know.

Dr. Gary Schwartz asked me to begin work on this book many times before I sat down to write these opening sentences. He felt it should all be documented for science and history and for whatever light it might shed on the true nature of the human condition.

I never said no to Gary; I yessed him to death. Yessing to death means agreeing repeatedly and promising – but sometimes when you make a promise, it gets buried under other stuff that seems more pressing at the time. I procrastinated out of the sense of frustration that it would be impossible to explain what really happened so you would truly understand, or that I would never be able to remember every bizarre incident. There was also the fear of damage to the ego that inevitably comes from being disbelieved or dismissed even though one is accurately conveying things of momentous importance.

And then one day my wife suggested we watch one of Walt Disney's first animated movies – *Dumbo*. In that movie there was a song with these lyrics that's sung by a flock of crows:

I heard a fireside chat, I saw a baseball bat
And I just laughed till I thought I'd die
But I be done seen about everything
When I see an elephant fly

I realized that my life, since the death of my mentor, Forrest J Ackeman, in 2008, had become as strange as seeing an elephant fly, and this only reinforced

my sense of obligation to set it all down accurately.

This book is about the evidence for life after death and for after death communication (ADC). It is also about a man whom I knew throughout my life, who I think somehow, by means that my mind cannot conceive, has been sending me messages since he passed away. I have come to think this for very sound reasons based upon precise and provable incidents that challenge all conventional comprehension. As time progressed, scientifically documented evidence points to my co-author, Dr. Gary Schwartz, having received messages from him, too. And as for our contributing writer, Dr. John Allison, the unexplained anomalies that began occurring in his life, after he began investigating our evidence of the apparent afterlife contact, have been as strange as anything ever reported in Ripley's *Believe It Or Not.*

My great friend is a man who was famous in certain circles, particularly in the worlds of science fiction literature and film. In fact, he coined the term "Sci-Fi." He was not only a skeptic about all things that are purportedly supernatural, he was a declared, committed atheist.

His name is Forrest J Ackerman, and like most of his friends, I called him Forry. The omission of a period after the "J" is not a misprint. He deliberately spelled it that way. It was a quirky preference stemming from his dedication to Esperanto, an artificially-created language that was intended to be spoken universally to promote world peace. His name in Esperanto was Fojack.

The late Forrest J Ackerman's Publicity Photo (circa 1980).

Forrest J Ackerman (left) and author Paul Davids in Davids' home in 1986.

His legion of friends often called him "Uncle Forry."

He was a man I believe was important to key developments in 20th century popular culture and movie commerce, deserving substantial credit for billions of dollars in America's foreign trade. As children, top movie creators such as Peter Jackson, George Lucas, Dennis Muren, John Landis, Rick Baker and Guillermo del Toro looked to Uncle Forry as the Pied Piper who tempted them to follow cinematic careers.

Golden Globe Award Party 2006. Front: Peter Jackson (left), Forrest J Ackerman (right). Back from Left: Basil Gogos, Rick Baker, Bob Burns, Paul Davids.

He was modest about assessing his own importance. If he were alive, he might dispute my giving him credit for such a thing. However, all of the key players in the realm of imaginative movies using special effects (that include

monsters from dinosaurs to dragons and aliens) will readily testify that the man they all called “Uncle Forry” was a huge influence on their decision to create the popular fantasy, sci-fi and horror films that are one of America’s major exports.

Forry died at age 92 on December 4, 2008. There are some things about his personality and sense of humor that will never fade in my mind.

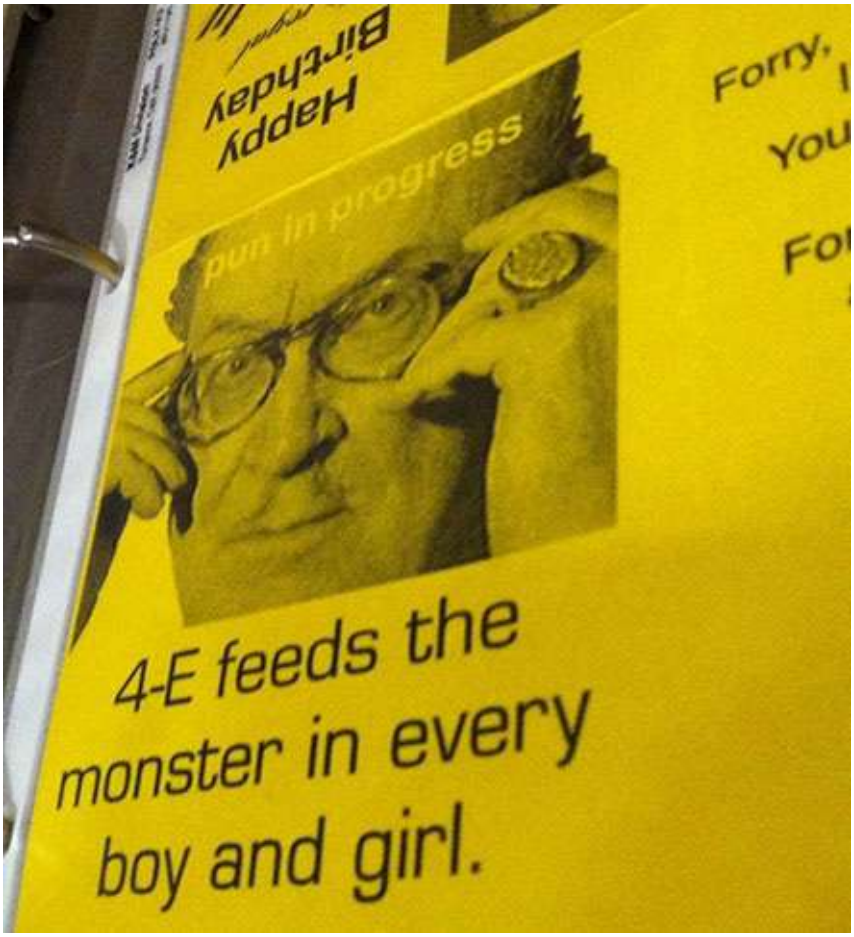
Forry loved to spout puns and to do plays-on-words, to invent tongue-teasing twists of speech and linguistic leaps, and to find people’s names within other names or words. It was an odd fascination, and Forrest J Ackerman was an odd man. No one who knew him would disagree. In fact, he was so widely known as a punster that an artist created a picture of him as a pilgrim locked in a pillory, and it said he was sentenced to the stockade for “PUNishment.”

The next photo is from one of his publications that is presented with text to prove puns were foremost in his mind. It’s hard to see the words emblazoned on his forehead. (He would say “Forry-head.”) But those words are “pun in progress.” And as for word-play, note that his name is spelled “4E.” That fact actually becomes important as a piece of evidence in the grand puzzle.

After death Forry first reached out with signs and wonders that were examples of word-play that showed up under circumstances that seemed utterly impossible. I believe he knew that by doing this, which was so fundamental to his humor and personality, the recipients (including especially me) would know who was knocking at their door from “somewhere else.”

Although he was an atheist who did not believe in an afterlife, he once said to me – and to other friends – that after he died, if he discovered otherwise, he would try to drop a line. He was always dropping people a line in life – usually with postcards from wherever he went in the world. It might just be a few words, but the card would let you know: “It’s 4E here, and I’m thinking of YOU.” I have saved about a dozen of them.

I knew Forrest J Ackerman very well, having discovered him after I turned eleven in 1958. I learned of him through the pages of a magazine he co-created, edited and wrote: *Famous Monsters of Filmland* (*FMOF*). I met him five years later, in 1963, with his very creative and enterprising publisher, James Warren. The occasion was when Forry took a cross-country road trip to meet his fans, ending up at the World Science Fiction Convention at the Statler-Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C. The man I idolized became a unique inspiration. I remained his friend till his dying night. And I believe I have learned over the past eight years that friendship does not end with death.



Whenever you were with Forry, there was always a pun in progress lurking in his mind ready to pop out and surprise you – and above all make you laugh.

The subject of this book may require an act of faith on your part, because you will have to trust that you are being told the unembellished truth. I do solemnly swear that it is all true. There is no invention, confabulation, embellishment or exaggeration. My motivation here from the outset was telling exactly what happened for the benefit of science and the advancement of knowledge. And there are no magic feathers like Dumbo used as a psychological crutch to attain liftoff. Facts are facts and I will give you, as they used to say in the Jack Webb TV series *Dragnet* – "nothing but the facts."

The skeptics of today may claim that I must have missed Forrest J Ackerman so much when he died that I imagined or invented the strange things that happened. Or perhaps I did things myself in some sort of a trance-like fugue state and then didn't remember. I don't believe that could possibly be true. There has been no fall-off in my powers of work and creative output now that I am sixty-eight, and I do not experience fugue states. My output is like it was when I

was forty – I make feature films, write books, and I create critically-acclaimed art that has recently been curated by the Ritz-Carlton of Laguna Niguel, California, for a three month exhibition.

Skeptics will call me a “fantasy prone personality,” a term they can apply to anyone who has written science fiction or done a host of creative things. If a person has a gift for creativity in fantasy realms, that doesn’t disqualify him from serving on a jury or testifying under oath in court. It does not mean that that person cannot distinguish the difference between fantasy and reality.

I have a granddaughter named Huxley Duvall. Huxley is a wonderful name, in my opinion, because it immediately calls to mind Aldous Huxley, the author of *Brave New World*. In one of Aldous Huxley’s other books, *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*, I came across the following incident in an essay called “Miracle in Lebanon.”

On a trip to the Middle East in the early 1950s, Aldous Huxley was taken to an old church where the locals were astounded by a strange phenomenon. For two or three days, a light from no identifiable source would shine upon a stone in the niche where the communion chalice was kept between services. The soft glow of light was being interpreted by the locals as a miracle. Aldous Huxley states: “For the rest of us, it was either a hoax, or an ordinary event in an unusual context, or else one of those delightful anomalies which distress the right-thinking scientist by actually turning up, every now and then, in all their mysterious pointlessness, and refusing to be explained away.”

I have already made clear that what I bring to you in this book is neither a hoax nor an ordinary event in an unusual context. And it is not just one anomaly. It is a very large number of anomalies which, as Aldous Huxley says, shall “distress the right-thinking scientist by refusing to be explained away.”

A mysterious photo, because there clearly is an "orb" near Forry's lapel next to his Dracula bat pin, and it is also near his heart. At Forry's 89th birthday party, he presented Paul Davids with Forry's Helping Hand Award, a tradition recognizing those who had helped Forry in life. The awards were a casting of his left hand, with the famous ring he wore that had belonged to Dracula actor Bela Lugosi.

Aldous Huxley also states in "Miracle In Lebanon" that "In Europe, from the eighteenth century onwards, the conviction that spiritual forces can act on material events has given way to a belief in the inexorable rule of natural law. The result is that the experience of the spiritual has become more and more inaccessible to modern society."

I do not like to categorize what happened to me as spiritual, because it was not intangible or ethereal. It was a series of precise, identifiable incidents that in some cases I am now convinced could not have happened according to "natural law." In other cases, the incidents consisted of synchronicities that were incredibly improbable but occurred frequently.

2. THE INKBLOT OBLITERATION

I am in the same room right now where, about seven years ago, on March 18th, 2009, one of the most inexplicable events of my life occurred. When it happened, I was both very upset and frightened. I knew that I was alone in the house – a vacation home my wife and I own in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The doors were locked, it was a quiet night, and I had just returned home about fifteen minutes previously and had been throughout the house, downstairs in my office and upstairs on the main floor. But there had to be an unseen visitor. More than unseen, actually (as that could imply it was someone hiding in a closet or just outside the bedroom door or even under the bed), I had a panicked sensation telling me this intruder was invisible. I never saw the visitor and never heard the visitor. I only saw the evidence of the visit.

I cried out in panic and anguish. So many thoughts went through my mind in rapid succession. Was this a message from an unseen demon? But I did not believe in demons. Somewhere as a glimmer in my mind I also thought maybe it was an angel or spirit or discarnate entity, but seriously, I didn't believe in those, either. I didn't know what it was, but I knew that something of that sort had to be present because of precise, provable physical things that happened a few feet away from me that evening.

This entity, or whatever it was, had just made a change on the first page of a document that I had brought into my bedroom to review from beginning to end. I had tossed the 24-page stapled document on the bed, on top of the covers. I had intended to read it in bed. It was a sort of log for taxes, a list with dates of business meetings and phone calls of 2008. I had been working on a list of business deductions, and the log would jog my memory about business meals or trips.

I had been in the bathroom for just a few minutes. I am being honest in every detail, so I will include the fact that I had an upset stomach and vomited into the toilet while in the bathroom. I had just come home from a Santa Fe casino where I had played a little blackjack and had dinner alone. Sometimes

those bargain prices for food in casinos aren't worth what you're saving.

When I came out of the bathroom, the document on my bed had four words on the first page blacked out precisely with ink or paint or something similar that was still moist. I had looked over the document just minutes previously. The first page had been quite ordinary. This happened while I was in the adjoining bathroom, and I never heard a sound.

Taken later that night, this is the bed where Paul had tossed the document onto the cover. His computer, which is open in this photo, was not on the bed when the incident occurred.

The house was only a little more than one year old. We had purchased it still unfinished in the autumn of 2006 and had trucked in furniture and art from Los Angeles in the cold of winter, with snow and ice still on the ground. There was not a leaky roof that could have dripped something on the document, and besides, anything dripping or leaking would have splattered or made blotches. And there were no leaky pens in the bed. The four words that had been blacked out on my document were very neatly and precisely obliterated. This appeared to have the precision of a surgical strike.

I was scared to death.

When I saw the inked words, one of the flurry of thoughts that sped through my mind had to do with "the black spot" of the pirates of old. Legend has it that "the black spot" means impending death or the threat of death. So there was a

question in my mind, a terrified sensation that perhaps this was a supernatural message that I was soon to die. However, I didn't believe in the supernatural, and it has certainly proven to be the case that it was not a warning of impending death. More than six years have passed, but I scarcely feel older. The mental and physical journey that has taken place in my life since then, in an effort to discover the meaning behind that incident, has been inconceivable. Before I unfold the details for you, however, I want you to understand what I soon learned about the history of the age-old debate (you might call it a war) between the diehard skeptics and the "believers" in such "paranormal" phenomena. I hadn't just joined a science debate; I had stepped onto a battlefield.

I. Houdini: Supreme Skeptic of Mediums

Among skeptics of mediums, clairvoyants, astrologers, fortune tellers and all paranormal activity, Harry Houdini is the iconic standard bearer. As one of the greatest professional magicians of all time, he was privy to the secrets of deception and misdirection to such an extent that many of his fellow magicians were baffled by his demonstrations. In Walter Gibson's 1953 book, *Houdini On Magic*, he reports that the magician once said that "I am not an irretrievable skeptic. I am not hopelessly prejudiced. I am perfectly willing to believe, and my mind is wide open; but I have, as yet, to be convinced. I am perfectly willing, but the evidence must be sane and conclusive."

Harry Houdini became so enraged at fortune tellers duping the public, that he publicly supported a bill before Congress to forbid fortune tellers from charging fees for their services in the District of Columbia. He even wanted to cut off their right to request donations, because that could be a loophole in banning the charging of fees. He testified before Congress that in thirty-five years, he had never seen one genuine medium.

"Millions of dollars are stolen every year in America and the government has never paid any attention to it, because they look upon it as a religion," he said. "Washington is the only place where you can buy a license for twenty-five dollars as a clairvoyant with which to blackmail and rob the public. They have not one genuine medium in Washington."

Houdini's rage was also directed at so-called "spiritualism," which could be interpreted as the religious framework under which mediums, clairvoyants and those who conduct séances perform their activities. He lumped mediums, fortune tellers and clairvoyants together as frauds and charlatans. He objected to the fact that it was so easy for such practitioners to obtain licenses as ordained ministers.

One didn't need to go to school or study to become a "reverend," and the title tended to give a false sense of credibility to those with this kind of spiritualist orientation.

Thus it was that the Congressional Record lists one of the most prestigious efforts to debunk all these kinds of claims as fraud.

Terms like "charlatan" and "fraud" are used to bludgeon those who are still motivated to take paranormal claims seriously. In the established world of science, the fear of labels like those has discouraged many scientists from even investigating claims of this kind, some of which are exceptionally intriguing and are not in any way motivated by publicity, financial gain or deception.

Houdini made financial challenges, the likes of which are perpetuated today by magicians such as James Randi. Houdini was so convinced that he could disprove any medium's claims of spirit communication, that he offered a ten thousand dollar challenge. Of course, prior to any claimant being awarded the money, the claimant would have to submit to Harry Houdini's personal observation of the so-called paranormal activities.

Additionally, to pay the ten thousand dollars, Houdini would have to fail at his personal attempt to duplicate the phenomena by the techniques of a professional magician.

Today, James Randi ("The Amazing Randi") has upped the incentive to one million dollars. He sets the standards of proof. Thus far, no one has collected. Many have felt intimidated from trying.

Recall that Houdini stated he was not an irretrievable skeptic. Yet in his demand for sane and conclusive evidence, he ruled out anything that smacked of coincidence. He acknowledged that "occasionally coincidences occur in the performance of magical feats that are so startling as to cause even the artist surprise, and such might easily be mistaken for actual manifestations of something occult by those who are believers in such things."

Houdini cites an incident at a banquet in his honor given by the Los Angeles Society of Magicians. An illusionist performed the "miracle" of changing a rolled cigarette paper into a live moth. "Unfortunately," writes Houdini, "the moth when produced was dead. But just as the metamorphosis was to occur, a living moth appeared from somewhere and circled about his head! Of course it was a coincidence, but a miraculous one," writes Houdini, who actually used "miraculous" as an adjective. He continued: "I was myself startled, and so was everyone else, the performer possibly most of all. I have never seen anything like it in my experience with the art of conjuring."

Harry Houdini, Magician/Escape Artist (1874 – 1926) (Born Erik Weisz).

II. Skeptics and Supporters

It is a brilliant description of an astonishing incident, and it is brushed off as coincidence, of course. Some skeptics love to use the word “mere.” It is not just a coincidence, it is a “mere” coincidence.

It is frustrating to me to confront these kinds of stark conclusions that seem to come from ingrained, fixed assumptions that close the door to discovery. I see the “mere coincidence” argument as a product of the fixed mind-set that allows for no possibility that something deeper is at work, a mind-set that refuses to consider the possibility that the universe does indeed interact with us and interplay with personal consciousness in ways that suggest the existence of an unseen, larger, over-riding “consciousness” in this vast universe.

In his day, Houdini became the gentleman adversary of his friend, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the author of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Sir Arthur was convinced, beyond any possible dissuading, that spirits of the deceased do exist and attempt to communicate with us. He was quite satisfied with results he obtained from mediums and at séances. He said he did not “believe” these things to be true, but that he “knew” them to be true, and he said “there is a big difference between believing a thing and knowing it.” The public was impressed. Surely the creator of the most logical detective ever conceived

would not easily be fooled or draw a hasty conclusion.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859 - 1930), Author of The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.

Houdini was not impressed. In the end, he considered Sir Arthur naïve and simply wrong.

Sir Arthur did not help his cause by falling into a trap, by endorsing a case of photographs supposedly of actual fairies that turned out to be a fraud. Did his failure of judgment in that one instance invalidate all of the other phenomena he personally experienced that seemed to him to be solid evidence in the case for spiritualism?

Years ago, I would probably have been on the same side as Harry Houdini in any of these kinds of arguments. Now much of the time I am on the side of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. I qualify that statement because, like Houdini, I know that there are cunning people who deliberately and deceptively play on human emotion by contriving frauds and hoaxes. I know of instances where self-proclaimed false psychics have been wolves in sheep's clothing, liars and cheats with sweet dispositions and seemingly sincere but totally concocted stories about their powers and psychic achievements.

Woody Allen dramatized this well in his 2014 film *Magic in the Moonlight*. In fact, Alfred Hitchcock provided a stunning example of this kind of deception in his classic film *Vertigo*. I strongly suspect that there are still those among us who will stage complex incidents or false séances for the pleasure of deception or profit, as in the two movies referenced above, and they do it in ways that

illustrate the old maxim that there's a sucker born every minute. There are many serious researchers of life after death who have little doubt that there are, in fact, situations continuing to the present day where duplicitous showmen pose as psychics and pull the wool over the eyes of the séance participants.

However, let's not permit the continued existence of this sort of deception to be the source our downfall or our rejection of the actual evidence for life after death and after death communication. A discerning person with the power of critical thinking usually can detect those sorts of ploys and should dismiss them if his inquiry or investigation into the facts does not in any way support the claims.

I have learned from my experiences that in spite of the scams that rankled the likes of Houdini, and which cause Penn and Teller's blood to boil, or which might cause Woody Allen to have an epileptic seizure, there is definitely a reality underlying what we call paranormal phenomena. With all due respect to Dr. Michael Shermer, Executive Director of the Skeptics Society (who was helpful to me when I filmed *The Life After Death Project*), I believe that the basic pitch of the skeptics, some of the mantras of the skeptical organizations, and the ardent denouncements of the naysayers often mislead us as much as the escaped con-man from the carnival.

The real phenomena can creep up on us when least expected. The impossible is not only possible but sometimes becomes probable. We may go through half a lifetime with nothing of this sort ever touching us, and then one day or night, at some very unexpected moment, a door opens and we are then like "damaged goods," so far as our efforts to cling to "normal" reality. Like the fictional tales of *The Twilight Zone*, you have entered some other dimension, or that other dimension has visited you. If it happens, and when it happens, you feel certain about it. Like a lion trainer with his lion, you can stand before any roaring skeptic unconcerned about his sharp teeth and threatened bite. You may not tame him with your calm certainty, but you will unnerve him and throw him off his game. You might even make him reconsider, and probably that's what I hope this book will do for some.

From childhood, I was taught to believe that the things I am about to reveal to you do not happen, and therefore they cannot be true. I was raised by a mother (Frances Davids), who taught public school, and my father (Dr. Jules Davids), was a professor of American history at Georgetown University. He authored textbooks and edited collections of historic diplomatic papers.

My father was the son of Hungarian Jewish immigrants, but he not only survived a career at a Catholic university, he excelled working with Jesuit priests

for over forty years. He was schooled in knowing how to get along, at exercising the kind of caution that comes with never rocking the boat. I do not know what my father would have said about what I am about to tell you, if he had lived long enough for me to share it with him before he developed Alzheimer's disease. He certainly would have known that I would not have invented a story like this. However, he would not have known how to integrate any of it into his conception of reality and the ways his personal experience dictated his views of what life is and what is possible.

Paul Davids (left), Forrest J Ackerman and Jules Davids, Ph.D. (1986).

He was a serious man, a rather famous professor of American diplomatic history. He was not a man of imagination; he was a man of letters. He was also a writer of textbooks who in fact assisted Senator John F. Kennedy substantially with the writing of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Profiles in Courage*.

"Assisted" is an understatement. He was credited in the Preface as having "assisted materially in the preparation of several chapters," and "materially" means he provided material. Jacqueline Kennedy had been his student at Georgetown when her husband had encouraged her to enroll in a graduate course in American history. For John F. Kennedy, it was a question of adding to Jackie's foundation of learning about America, since he was thinking of running for President. Later, in 1968, Bill Clinton was one of my father's students. My sister and I still possess former President Clinton's term paper from that class.

My father was well grounded in reality. If he had lived to hear me tell about the odd and mysterious inkblot, I expect that he would not have dwelled on it for long, as I did. He would not have brushed it off as inconsequential, because it was clearly too strange for that. However, I think he would have quickly judged that there are some things that the mind and science and our senses, logic and reason cannot answer, and therefore we are better served in relying on what we know. And he would have returned to writing a textbook, or his project of

editing forty volumes of *The China Papers* – compiling every single diplomatic paper in history between the United States and China.

My mother reacted differently. She worried about me. She wondered if this was a symptom of a psychological problem, since obviously what I was describing about the blackout of those words was not possible. She was eighty-eight when this happened, still of sound mind, but cantankerous as always – skeptical and suspicious. Certainly not a believer in the supernatural or anything paranormal, not even extrasensory perception (ESP). Confronted with the document, and hearing my developing theory that it was deliberately done by an invisible spirit, she reacted with horror at the thought that I was talking like a crazy man. "You can't be serious," she said. "Please don't say that to anyone else. You wouldn't want anyone outside the family to hear you say that. Please don't even mention this to your sister."

Obviously at that point she had no glimmer that I would consider it so important that I would involve scientists at three institutions of higher learning to try to explain it. There was no thought that I would ever film a feature documentary about it (*The Life After Death Project*) or write this book about it with university professors who participated in the investigation.

Paul's parents, Frances and Jules Davids, visit Forry's home, the Ackermansion, in 1986, having progressed from the days when they would forbid Paul to own Forry's monster magazines.

Paul's mother, Frances Davids, inspects the chair Forry's maternal great-grandfather seated Abraham Lincoln in to take the President's portrait. Forry's family connection with American history made him a little more "normal" to Paul's mother, but he was still categorized as someone off in the "fringes" and a little "weird."

My mother had a long career as a grade school teacher in the Montgomery County, Maryland school system. She was pragmatic and agnostic to the very end. She had no use for religion. Her father had been an intellectual and a socialist. Praying was an alien concept in their family.

Like my father's family, her parents were New York Jews, but they had little in common with my father's parents, who had been strictly Orthodox and had kept Kosher their entire lives. My father's parents were so strict, in fact, that once my father was beaten by my grandfather for cutting his sideburns, something no Jewish boy living in Brooklyn in those days would be permitted to do. After that, my father had no use for religion.

My mother lived in the world of what she knew, which was all very "down to earth." She rarely speculated. She stayed within all the boxes that society defines for us so precisely. Even her grammar was perfect. She did not believe in flying saucers or aliens. She did not believe in God. She did not believe in life after death. Although, as I have said, she described herself as an agnostic, it always seemed to me that she did not enjoy challenges that might have tipped her agnosticism toward any kind of esoteric belief.

III. And So It Begins – The Inkblot – March 18th, 2009

Any agnosticism I might have had about spirits was certainly quickly extinguished on the evening of Wednesday, March 18, 2009. As I said, I was in the home that my wife and I own and use as a vacation getaway in Santa Fe, New Mexico, a very large house of about 3,200 square feet. I was holding the document and looking at the part that was blacked out and still moist. I had given the print command almost two hours earlier, so of course the ink was dry when I stapled those pages and took them upstairs to the master bedroom and plopped the document onto the bed.

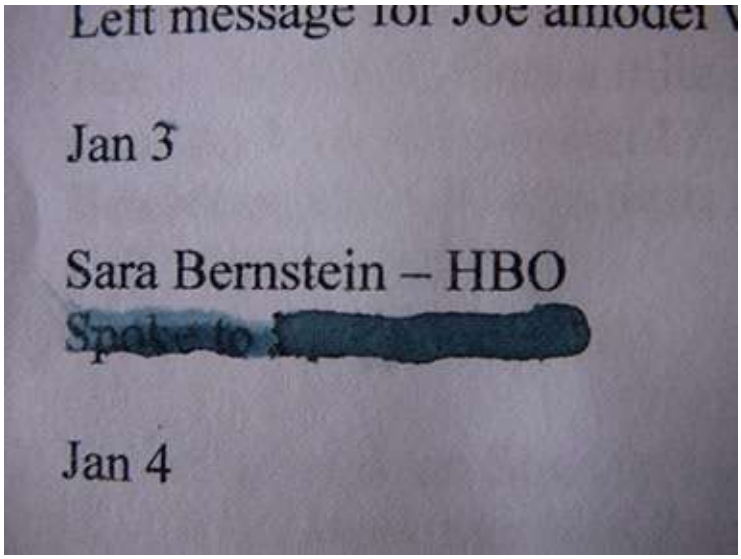
I could not determine right away which words had been obliterated. I could still read the first two words, which were "Spoke to." But the next two words were blacked out beyond any possibility of recognition. I would have to refer to my computer file later that night to determine what the words were.

I was careful not to touch the moist ink. I at once regarded this as a very strange event and knew that the paper and ink were the evidence of it. I did not tamper with the evidence.

To me, amid the flurry of fears and convoluted thoughts that flooded my mind in those moments, the intuitive feeling was that I was in the presence of a ghost that had just interacted with me. Instinctively, I called out to whomever or whatever had done this. I said that if there was a spirit present, and if it had evil intentions, it should leave my house immediately; it was not welcome. I remained in silence afterwards, trembling.

I did not deal with the issue that perhaps the ghost had good and constructive intentions – that perhaps this was a learning experience for me intended to teach me and inform me of some things I could not possibly know.

Some skeptical and debunking critics who have seen my documentary, *The Life After Death Project*, have misstated the basic facts of this incident. First, they like to refer to the ink obliteration as a "smudge." I'll cry foul at that. The word "smudge" implies something accidental, as if some moist ink had just smeared somehow. It was not a "smudge." It was a deliberate targeting of four words, which is the only reasonable conclusion. There were also two levels of darkness, or opacity, also very precise.



A portion of the document with the four obliterated words on the first page.

It took the inkblot minutes to dry, and during those minutes, I received a call from my wife, Hollace Davids, from Los Angeles. We talked for a couple minutes, and during that time, I was feeling agitated and still in shock from the incident, but I did not mention it to my wife. I did not feel capable of discussing it right then. I knew it would sound crazy and would upset or concern her. I didn't know how to explain it over the phone without making her wonder if I had lost my mind. I decided I would bring it up later, when I could actually show her the document.

I took photos of the bedroom and the adjoining living room that night. Nothing unusual showed up in the photos. No orbs, no specters, no hints of anything bizarre.

I referred to my computer file to determine the blacked out words. They were "Spoke to Joe Amodei," and the date of the entry on the document was January 3, 2008.

I was completely baffled when I realized what the words were, because they seemed of absolutely no consequence.

Much later I noticed that a few lines earlier on the same page of the document there was an entry from January 2, 2008, that said "Left message for Joe Amodei." Those words were untouched.

Whoever blacked out the words chose to emphasize "Spoke to" rather than "Left message for." This later proved to be significant.

Joe Amodei is a DVD distributor in New York whom I had spoken to only once. Craig Kornblau, President of Universal Studios Home Entertainment at

that time, had suggested I call Joe Amodei to see if he might be interested in the distribution of my film *Jesus in India*. This was after Universal had determined they were only interested in TV distribution rights to that film, but not the DVD, and so I needed a distributor for the physical DVD.

The film is an exploration of the theory held by many in India that Jesus visited their nation during the so-called missing years, from age thirteen to thirty. The Bible says nothing about Jesus during those years except that he increased in wisdom and favor with God and man. I had filmed most of the movie in 2005 during six very hot weeks of travel throughout four thousand miles of India.

The one time I had spoken to Joe Amodei, I had quickly learned that he was not interested in *Jesus in India*. We did not speak again until about four years later, long after this incident occurred.

I did not know him. I had never met him. One phone call – that was all. So I thought to myself, if there was some major news about Joe Amodei, why was a spirit or whatever it was contacting me? Why not contact a relative of Joe Amodei? Even if he had been the victim of some tragedy or had passed away, why tell me?

The message, if message it was, proved to be a total mystery to me from the beginning, and that bothered me a great deal. I had expected that, given the mystery and drama with which the ink obliteration occurred, I should have been able to understand the intent. Was it something that needed to be deciphered? Was it a code? An anagram of some kind?

As I said, I took photos that night, and I took more in daylight the next morning. These were photos around the house, plus photos of the document, including the front page and its back, and the second page. I could see that some of the ink (or whatever had made the obliteration) had leached through the page, which was stained on the back from the ink. It smeared outward on the back of the page. Some of the ink also transferred onto page two.

I was determined that those pages should be analyzed by chemists to try to determine what had happened and why. Could it be explained? I wanted help from science. But it would be some time before I could determine how best to act on that intention.

IV. The Tribute – 8th March, 2009

I think that when a seemingly inexplicable event occurs in your life, it is important to think about what has happened recently that might in some way have provoked, influenced or triggered it.

I was very aware that barely a week prior to the inkblot appearing, I had been a speaker at a grand Hollywood tribute for the late Forrest J Ackerman at the Egyptian Theater on March 8, 2009. He had passed away at age 92, a couple minutes before midnight on December 4th, 2008. He did not want a funeral or memorial, but he told his principal caregiver and best buddy, a Hawaiian named Joe Moe who was intensely devoted to him, that it would be okay to hold a tribute.

I was honored to have been asked to be one of the speakers at the tribute. I was in rarefied company. Other speakers who were present included Ray Bradbury, Guillermo del Toro, John Landis and Rick Baker. Peter Jackson, the acclaimed director of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and Universal's *King Kong*, who had admired Forrest J Ackerman since Peter's boyhood as an aspiring filmmaker, provided a message that he recorded in New Zealand. The attendees were spellbound as Peter's touching words about Forry were projected on the Egyptian's large screen. The Egyptian Theater was absolutely packed on that memorable day.

I spoke from the heart. Though Forry's health had been failing for several years, and though he had reached an advanced age, it was very hard for all of his friends to part with Uncle Forry. The tribute was an outpouring of admiration.

At the tribute, I met two filmmakers from Canada who had made a feature documentary about Forry's life. It is called *Famous Monster: Forrest J Ackerman*. Michael MacDonald, the director who hailed from Halifax, and Ian Johnston, the screenwriter from Toronto, told a remarkable story to me that day.

The day before the tribute, they had visited Forrest J Ackerman's crypt at Forest Lawn Memorial Park. In a somewhat playful mood, Mike had rapped on Forry's crypt a few times and said "Uncle Forry, hi, it's us, Michael and Ian, we've come to show our movie about you at the tribute for you." They did not think that rapping on the crypt would be disrespectful, because it seemed to them to be in the spirit of Forry's playful approach to everything in life. They said that if it had been anybody else, they never would have done that, but with Uncle Forry, they felt comfortable.

They filmed the incident with an IPhone.

What happened to them in the next hour left them baffled, excited and somewhat spooked.

After rapping on Forry's crypt, they returned to the hostel where they were staying on Orange Drive in Hollywood, a two story Hollywood quasi-mansion a few blocks from the famous Chinese Theater where footprints and handprints of the stars are embedded in cement. It was also across the street from the Magic

Castle, the unique and majestic magician's club of the Academy of Magical Arts, of which I had been a member since 1986, when I had worked at Marvel Productions as the production coordinator on the original *Transformers* animated TV shows.

In the room that they shared in the hostel, their two computers were on a bureau, spaced a few feet apart. Ian's computer was "down," meaning that it was on but asleep, with a dark screen. Mike used his computer to attempt to post a blog at Facebook.

He explained that prior to posting, Facebook required him to type in the letters and numbers of a CAPTCHA Code. Those are codes with squiggly letters and numerals. The codes give assurance that there is a human user trying to post, rather than some sort of mass mailing spam – in fact it is an acronym for "Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart."

To Mike's astonishment, the CAPTCHA code that came up was: "Ackerman000." He pointed this out to Ian, who came over to look. They both realized that the odds of this happening by pure coincidence were astonishingly small. Mike felt that it was a direct response to his having rapped on Forry's crypt. They noted that the "A" of the name was the only capital letter, and that Ackerman was spelled precisely like Forry's last name, and not as Akerman or Ackermann or any other variation.

Ian Paul Johnston (left) and Michael MacDonald (right).

The crypt marker of Forrest and Wendayne Ackerman at Forrest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, California.

Mike was not a skeptic when it came to ghostly matters. Although I learned more about his beliefs in subsequent conversations than I did that night, it turns out that he is convinced that he has lived in a haunted house. He said that once, in Halifax, he had done a video Skype conversation in which his correspondent clearly saw an elderly woman moving around behind Mike, but Mike asserted that he was alone in the room.

There were other incidents, too. Mike believed, before this incident, that ghosts have the power or ability to influence some events in our physical world, but only in relatively slight ways, not ways that require a great deal of pressure or force. He believes that if something is near a "tipping point," such as a glass at the edge of a table in danger of falling off, that a ghost might be able to provide the energy to make it fall. His philosophy does not take account of some reports of poltergeist activity where reportedly heavy objects, like books, might apparently be thrown across a room by some unseen force.

In any event, it was not difficult for him, intellectually, to draw the conclusion that the spirit of Forry had directly intervened by causing a CAPTCHA Code of his name to appear after their visit to his crypt.

Mike's point of view was that apparently over a thousand people had gathered in Hollywood that weekend to attend the tribute at the Egyptian Theater. This was an intense focus on the life of one man who was now deceased. The attention was concentrated and devoted. Mike pointed out: what better time than for Forry, in spirit, to make an appearance and follow what was going on? After all, it was all about him.

Ian, on the other hand, was a lifelong skeptic. He did not believe in ghosts. He felt that phenomena attributed to ghosts is often a misinterpretation of events, like optical illusions, and that a logical explanation usually lies behind such baffling phenomena. However, he was very surprised and startled by seeing the

CAPTCHA Code.

They discussed what the 000 might mean. Mike speculated that it might imply a sort of “zeroing out,” meaning life had started again (for Forry) in the spirit world, from a beginning – or zero. He drew the conclusion that it meant “Ackerman new life.” And Ian blurted out, “Is he really dead?”

At that moment, the second phenomenon occurred, this time from Ian’s computer. A voice blurted out the words “Oh my God, no way!”

It was a childlike voice coming from the computer. The computer screen was still dark. Ian stated to me that, though he was a skeptic, his computer had no business talking to him in what seemed to be a direct response to his question as to whether Forrest J Ackerman was really dead. What’s more, his screen saver at that time was an image of Forry as a four year old child. That black and white photo, taken around 1920, showed a cute boy with a mischievous smile and a sort of Beatles moptop hair style. The hair was blond then. Forry’s hair turned dark with time.

Through an internet search, Ian and Mike discovered that the words “Oh my God, no way!” are uttered by an animated emoticon you can find on YouTube. There is animation of a sort of smiley face saying those words and then rolling over. That soundtrack of those words actually exists, and you can find it online.

Ian was mystified, however, because his computer was asleep at the time, with the screen dark. He has said that he was not even logged onto the internet. He had no recollection of ever visiting that animated emoticon on Youtube. Could it have gotten onto his computer as part of an advertisement? The point was, he wasn’t even aware of its existence until his search.

Ian was clearly troubled by the incident. He felt challenged by it and could well understand how Mike so quickly interpreted it as a direct response from Forry to their crypt visit. The response of both computers seemed like the sort of mischievous thing Forry would do, in keeping with his personality which always embraced the practical joke or twist of words.

However, Ian was not willing to embrace that conclusion, preferring to admit he just did not know. If this was a coincidence, it was one of the most unlikely coincidences he had ever experienced. He wished he had an explanation but admitted he did not. By contrast, a ghostly conclusion was not a huge leap in reasoning for Mike to make. He attributed a number of other experiences in his life, at various ages, to the presence of ghosts.

Although Mike could not have known for a fact whether anyone else had a previous apparent message from Forry before them, at that point Mike concluded

that it was likely Forry had chosen them for his first communication from the Other Side. Mike felt it made sense because they had made a biographical film about him that had played on Canadian television. They had examined his life and friends in intimate detail. Mike reasoned that that made them a logical choice as people to whom Forry would reach out.

In fact, when they had shown their film to Forry a year before, when it was over Forry had playfully remarked: “Well, you’ve summed up my whole life. I guess I can go now.” And by “go now” Forry did not mean getting up to leave the room.

This image of Forry at age four and a half was the screen saver on Ian’s computer when the computer spoke in a childlike voice.

The DVD cover of the Canadian documentary about Forry written by Ian Johnston and directed by Mike MacDonald.

V. Messages from Uncle Forry?

I realized later that this had happened to them about a week before the inkblot inexplicably appeared on my document. The proximity in time brought this thought to mind: could the inkblot have been connected with the computer messages received by Ian and Mike? After all, like Ian and Mike, I too had made a film about Forry – *The Sci-Fi Boys*. My film had profound emotional impact on him. The night of the premiere, sponsored by Universal Studios Home Entertainment at the Hollywood Egyptian Theater, Forry had said to Joe Moe that it felt as if that evening were the pinnacle of his life. Coincidentally, just twenty-two months later, the tribute for Forry would be held in that same theater.

The Sci-Fi Boys was not exclusively about Forry, but it dealt with him in substantial ways, crediting him for his enormous influence on the growth of movie science fiction, mainly through the colossal encouragement he gave to youngsters (who were readers of his magazines), who later became major producers and directors.

Was Forry now reaching out specifically to filmmakers who had applauded his life, as if he was (as a spirit) seeking more publicity?

Was he fulfilling the promise he made that if it turned out there was in fact an afterlife, he would drop us a line if he could?

The ink obliteration was literally a line, as if by an editor putting a notation on a manuscript. Yes, that whole concept seemed impossible, but the very appearance of the obliteration, under the circumstances that occurred, was impossible according to the "normal" reality we know. I wondered what kind of editing style Forry used. Did he black out words completely in a sort of compulsive way? Or did he just draw a line through words targeted for omission?

The other troubling element for me, as I examined my own question, was why in the world would Forry black out the words: Spoke to Joe Amodei? I just couldn't fathom it. It seemed to make no sense at all.

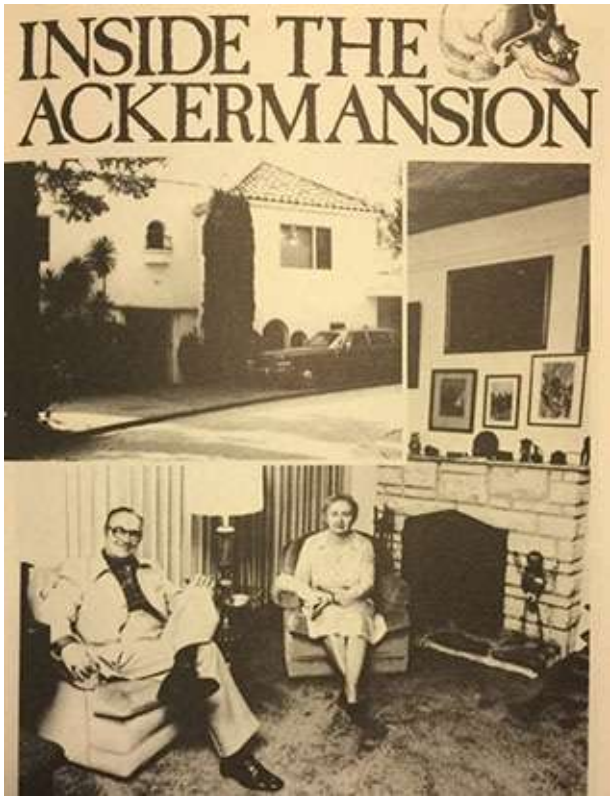
VI. Checking In With Joe Moe

Within a couple weeks after the ink incident, I got the idea to try to obtain some examples of Forry Ackerman's editorial style. I needed some rough drafts of articles he had written that had his editorial notes. I believed that the most likely person to have such texts, or to know where to obtain them, would be Joe

Moe, who was Forry's best pal and caretaker for over a decade.

Joe and I had become close during the filming of *The Sci-Fi Boys*. He had helped in every possible way, never turning aside any request for assistance. He had lived with Forry as his assistant in the 18-room Ackermansion for many years, the most loyal and devoted of followers.

He had continued to live with Forry after he moved in 2003 to what they called the Acker-mini-mansion at 4511 Russell Street in Hollywood – hardly a mansion at all – merely a small yellow California bungalow of probably not more than 1300 square feet. (As I write these words, a battle is underway against the city of Los Angeles by those who do not want that bungalow torn down and turned into a parking lot.)



The Ackermansion as seen in a page of Famous Monsters *magazine, with Forry and his wife, Wendayne, in the comfort of their home/museum.*

When I called Joe Moe to ask him about getting access to some of Forry's edited documents, I had already located a reprint of one document Forry had edited, in a book about *Famous Monsters* magazine, and that document had some blackouts very reminiscent of the ink obliteration on my document. However, I was confused because I couldn't determine if the editorial notations

had been done by Forry or by his publisher, James Warren.

Before I could even state the reason I was calling and ask my question, Joe said there was something he wanted to tell me. He said that days after the tribute, he had had a remarkable dream that didn't seem like a dream. Joe said it was like a super-conscious experience, something that left a stronger impression than reality itself. As a lifelong skeptic, like Forry, he was not prone to believe in visitations by the deceased.

However, Joe said that in this super-conscious dream, Forry walked into his bedroom with a mischievous smile on his face, and it truly seemed as if he were really there. Forry said, "Hi pal, seen any good Hollywood tributes lately?" (It was common for Forry to call some people "pal," especially Joe Moe.) Joe said it was as if Forry was standing there, and he said his expression was just like when Forry used to play a game of holding out two closed hands and saying "Pick a hand." Both hands had a small gift. And if someone picked the less favorable gift, Forry would say "Too bad you didn't pick this one" – but then he would give you both gifts anyway. That's the way he was.

"Forry – were you there at the tribute, did you see it?" Joe asked the apparition of Forry.

"Oh, it was fair," Forry replied teasingly.

That was a shared joke between the two of them. Forry used to have a guest book (he called it a "Ghost Book") for visitors to his Ackermansion to write comments about his sci-fi collection. Once someone wrote the comment that Forry's collection was "fair." At the time, that had upset Forry a great deal. He had remarked to Joe, "What would that fellow have said about the Taj Mahal, that it was 'fair?'"

During the apparition-dream, Forry suddenly broke into a big smile and said, "No, really, pal, that was the 9th Wonder of the World!"

That made it all the more real, because Forry NEVER would have referred to his own tribute as the 8th Wonder of the World. That honor was permanently reserved for King Kong. It said up in lights, in the original version of *King Kong*, that Kong was the 8th Wonder of the World. Therefore, Forry's tribute would have had to be the 9th Wonder.

Joe explained that at that very moment, he awakened. He said everything he saw was the same as in his dream – the view of his bedroom – but suddenly – no Forry. Only a few remnants of memorabilia related to Forry, scattered around the room. But the man – or the spirit of the man as seen in the dream – was not there.

Joe said to me, "I'm a skeptic, Paul, you know that, but it was as if Forry

really came and spoke to me."

Joe said to me later that, at the moment he said those words, it sounded to him as if I had just put my hand on a stove. He heard my audible gasp.

The fact is, at that very moment, I practically went into a state of shock.

That was the moment I realized, for the first time, that phonetically, Joe Moe's very name is contained in "Spoke to Joe Amodei." "Mo" is there, and there is an "e" just after the "d." I suddenly felt sure that I understood the message of the ink obliteration. Spoke to Joe Moe!

Whoever was behind the inkblot on my document had not chosen to black out the words on an earlier line that said "Left Message for Joe Amodei." He had deliberately chosen "Spoke to Joe Amodei," and that was appropriate because he had not "left a message for Joe Moe," he had "spoken to Joe Moe."

As I've explained, Forry was fascinated with word play, and his obsession included words within words and names within names. Suddenly the ink obliteration really seemed like something that Forry would have done to let me know that he really did appear to Joe Moe, and that he really spoke to Joe and thanked him. Expressing thanks to Joe was like extending the thanks to all those who had helped Joe and had participated in the tribute, and that included me. It hit me like a flash of light. The ink obliteration was simply a nice, definite, unambiguous but seemingly "paranormal" way of letting me know (by "dropping me a line" like he promised) that, be it in a super-conscious dream or an elevated state of mind, Forry had actually appeared in spirit and SPOKE TO JOE MOE!

Joe Moe, with his natural skepticism, interpreted his experience as a lucid dream. However, Forry was using me to prove, by offering solid, physical evidence that could be studied by science (the ink obliteration on my document), that Joe's uncanny experience had been no mere dream. As bizarre and incredible as that conclusion may seem, it made perfect sense to me as soon as I realized it, like an illumination inside my brain. And it has made sense to me ever since. My journey and challenge was determining how "hard science" could be used to prove it. And that was a journey of many years.

VII. It All Feels So "Forry"

In the weeks that followed, by searching the pages of very old *Famous Monsters* magazines, I found dozens of examples of Forry using wordplay in this precise way. I found names within words or names within names.

A few examples:

People called Forry “Ack” as one of his many nicknames. A cover of “Famous Monsters” stated in big bold print that it was a 35th anniversary “SPECT-ACK-ULAR!”

The cover of issue #200 of Famous Monsters declared boldly that it was SPECT-ACK-ULAR. Ac (for Ack) stands out in the middle of “Spectacular” the way “Mo” (for Moe) stands out in the middle of “Amodei.” Apparently, Forry’s mischievous personality and quirky sense of humor has survived him.

Forry wrote an opening editorial in one of the magazines showing a photo of himself with a gorilla alongside him. His comment was that he had been burning the midnight oil trying very hard to finish the magazine, and the gorilla had kept him company, so the caption was: “Let’s keep this “JUST A-MONKS OURSELVES.”

He had changed the word “amongst” to reference “monkey.” I also note that it’s a “Mo” syllable that’s been altered in the middle of the word (as in the case of Amodei) which shows us Forry has done this same thing with “Mo” before.

These are all hints, from things he did in his lifetime as a professional editor, that show how reasonable it is to conclude that he would call attention to the name Amodei as a clue that he was referring to his close friend and caretaker who was the organizer of his tribute after death: Joe Moe.

Paul Davids holds up a page of Famous Monsters with a typical Forry Ackerman wordplay pun – with a gorilla alongside him while burning the midnight oil, Forry says, "Let's keep this JUST A-MONKS OURSELVES."

Here's another delightful example of Forry's word play that appeared in *Famous Monsters*. By changing a few letters, DYNAMITE was changed to DYNA-MIGHT, giving a new meaning.

A Mighty Fun Pun from Forry's Pen. "Dynamite" has become "Dyna-Might."

Once again, this example shows his tendency to favor words-within-words, or to create a word-within-a-word where none existed before, in which he would keep the new word similar in sound or syllable to what was there before the change.

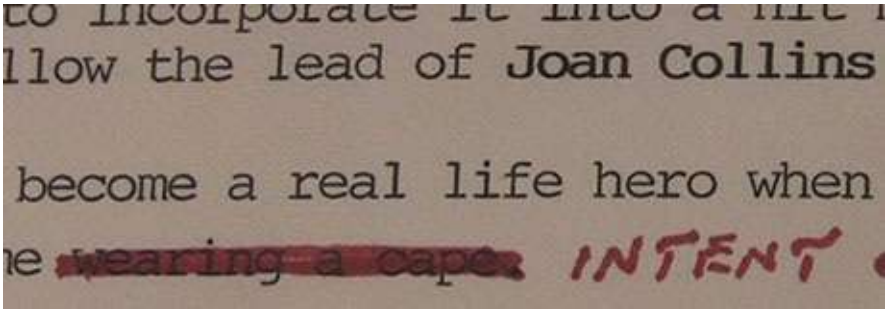
A couple years before he passed away, Forry signed an autograph I requested on an issue of *Famous Monsters* (an issue with an exceptionally long article about Ray Harryhausen). Forry signed it "HOO-RAY FOR HARRYHAUSEN & PAUL DAVIDS." In other words, he broke up the word "hooray" to emphasize that it had Ray Harryhausen's first name embedded in it – the same as what he had done in an early short story he wrote, when he broke up the word "Hoo-ray" to make a reference to a ray gun.

Much later on, I located numerous documents written and edited by Forrest J Ackerman that showed he did sometimes obliterate words in exactly the same style and appearance as in my document. (Sometimes he used red ink!)

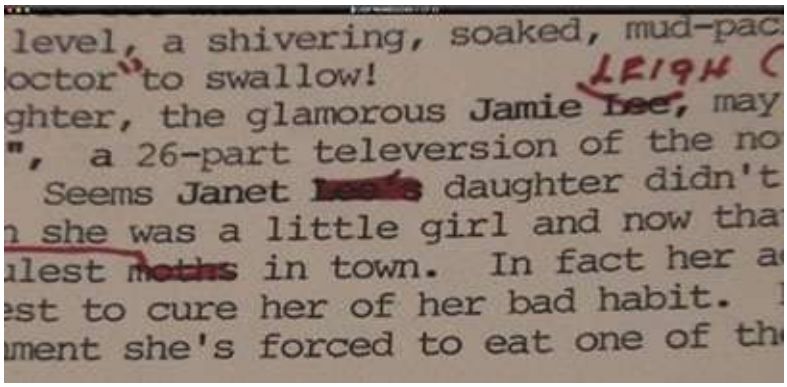
Ian Johnston had acquired a document that Forry had written, that had the

blacking out of words in two different levels of opacity, just like happened on my document. Forry had crossed out a lot of words in a sentence but then had gone back to totally cross out a few of the words that apparently he really did not want anyone to read.

These events were the beginning of a mystery that has continued now for over about seven years with dozens of accompanying incidents. At first it had the feel of playful mischief. But soon I realized the purpose was to make a larger point. Forry seemed to be saying to me, loud and clear: "Paul, I was wrong. There is life after death. I still exist. I am still me."



This is a known edit by Forrest J Ackerman. Note how the precision of the obliteration of words resembles the "Spoke to Joe Amodei" ink obliteration. It is precise, but he has not blocked out the lower parts on the letters "g" and "p" which go lower than the other letters. We observed the same style in Paul's document obliteration where the lower part of the letter "p" of "Spoke to" (in "Spoke to Joe Amodei") is not blacked.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LEIGH
ghter, the glamorous Jamie Lee, may
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Seems Janet Lee's daughter didn't
she was a little girl and now tha
ilest moths in town. In fact her a
est to cure her of her bad habit.
ment she's forced to eat one of th

Forry's edit covers over where Janet Leigh's last name was mis-spelled as "Lee." Again, he's been very precise in covering the letters and even the apostrophe.

By taking these presumed post-mortem actions in spirit, apparently Forry was creating mayhem in the lives of the living, letting his friends know (and through them the rest of the world) that there is life after death – that we go on. It appeared to me that Forry, who had spent his earthly existence as an ardent disbeliever in life after death, was now a spirit with a mission, showing the same intent and sense of purpose he had demonstrated as a trailblazer and futurist in life. If there is an existence for us beyond this one that we know, it seemed to me that Forrest J Ackerman would be the one who would take it upon himself to communicate across the "veil."

In contradiction to all the materialistic prejudices of my upbringing, my agnosticism and resistance to all superstition, I have come to the conclusion that Forrest J Ackerman has dropped me a line repeatedly since he died. I did not seek it, and I certainly did not expect it. The evidence is so repetitive and obvious now that only the most cynical and diehard debunkers could ignore it or attempt to belittle it or explain it away without valid or satisfactory answers. I have implored many who have top scientific credentials to explain all that has happened. None have succeeded. And in one case, the case of Dr. John Allison, a professor of chemistry at The College of New Jersey who as you will soon learn studied the ink obliteration with the best tools of modern science for three years, weird and unexplained incidents began happening to him the very week he began working on the case – and one event was captured on camera.

3. FORRY AND ME

I. Growing Up With Forry

Forrest J Ackerman was a major part of my life for at least forty-five years, so if it was his choice to include me in his afterlife adventures, I appreciate it! Clearly I'm not alone in this group. To document our relationship, and to point out some things about him that might be worth understanding, let me reminisce, if I may.

Forry was, to me, one of the most interesting personalities of my parents' generation. He was a little older than my parents, who were both born in 1921. Forry was born in 1916. I considered him to be important in my life throughout the decades. He died December 4, 2008, at two minutes to midnight. I was last with him about a month before that, on Halloween of 2008, when I visited him in his home. I knew him personally for 45 years. Though I first met him in 1963, I initially became familiar with him when the first issue of his magazine came out nationally in February of 1958. Thus, during his lifetime, he was part of my life for exactly half a century.

The target audience, at least for the early issues of Forry's magazine, consisted of boys of about ten or eleven. I was eleven when it first arrived. Through the years, I would say that my four favorite magazines, in no particular order, are *MAD*, *The New Yorker*, *Playboy* and *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. At age eleven, *The New Yorker* and *Playboy* had not yet entered my life. *MAD* had been a favorite for years, and then came *Famous Monsters*, from publisher James Warren of Philadelphia and Forrest J Ackerman, of Hollyweird, Karloffornia (two examples of his puns, that he liked to repeat for every visitor). He even had a 4SJ of Karloffornia sign outside his house by his side gate (4SJ for Forrest J and Karloffornia in honor of *Frankenstein* horror actor Boris Karloff).

Forry was known as "Mr. Science Fiction" and also "Dr. Acula," a pun on his name and Dracula. He was probably the most supremely well-versed and

serious scholar of science fiction and horror literature and cinema who ever lived, and he was there for the beginnings of cinema in the silent movie days. The movie genre magazine he edited, *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, was the first of its kind and certainly the most popular. It is a tribute to Forry that the magazine, still published today by publisher Philip Kim nearly 60 years since its inception, lists the late Forrest J Ackerman as the Honorary Editor-in-Chief.

The 4SJ OF KARLOFFORNIA sign outside Forry's Ackermansion.

The first issue of Famous Monsters of Filmland magazine, from Warren Publishing (1958). Forry and James Warren created almost 200 issues together.

Forry was smart, cunningly perceptive, attentive and playful, a master of puns, devoted to excelling at the invented language Esperanto, terrific at imitating spooks and vampires from the graveyard, generous – and one who

appreciated all people without any ounce of prejudice.

He attended nudist colonies with his wife Wendayne back when that was considered a naughty but popular indulgence. He appreciated beautiful women but was not a playboy. He was above all a collector par excellence when it came to very special items related to movie history or the literature of science fiction and horror. Edgar Allan Poe, Mary Shelley, Jules Verne and H.G. Wells were four of his most admired authors; George Pal and Fritz Lang two of his favorite producer/directors. He also loved the music of Sammy Davis, Jr. and Al Jolson.

His home was the envy of every science fiction or horror fan that I knew, and the pages of his magazine were filled with pictures of his house that he called the Ackermansion. The first Ackermansion was on Sherbourne in Los Angeles, and later he moved to a bigger Ackermansion, an 18-room home on Glendower in the Los Feliz district of L.A. His home was a repository for memorabilia of all kinds concerning science fiction, fantasy and horror films and literature. Forry had props from everyone's favorite horror and sci-fi films, filling every room of the lower and main floors and much of the upper floor as well. Science fiction author Ray Bradbury, whom Forry helped get started in his career, called the house the Fort Knox of science fiction. Forry took great pride in having invented the term sci-fi, which rolled off his tongue after he heard the term hi-fi, for high fidelity.

As virtually all normal kids in the late 1950s had the dream of going to Disneyland, all of the geeky introverts and social misfits who craved movie monsters – and the imaginative, far-reaching types – had the dream of visiting Forry in his Ackermansion, where they could soak in the glory of gory props from movies they knew well, or futuristic models and other coveted items. Director John Landis, famous for films such as *Animal House*, *The Blues Brothers* and *American Werewolf in London*, described Forry in this way: "a man of legendary accomplishments with extraordinary influence on generations of writers and filmmakers."

Forry saw Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* over 100 times, liked to imitate Al Jolson's singing, had a mad crush on Marlene Dietrich, and had a wide circle of friends, clients, admirers, acolytes, jealous enemies and parasites.

As a boy growing up in Mexico, Guillermo del Toro, the masterful director of films such as *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Pacific Rim* and *Crimson Peak*, wrote Forry letters begging Forry to adopt him. He said he learned English by reading *Mad* and *Famous Monsters*.

When asked to make a statement for Forry's tribute, Stephen King said simply, "Just tell them I loved that man." When he was a boy of about ten,

Stephen King sent Forry his first story, asking him if he would publish it in *FMOF*.

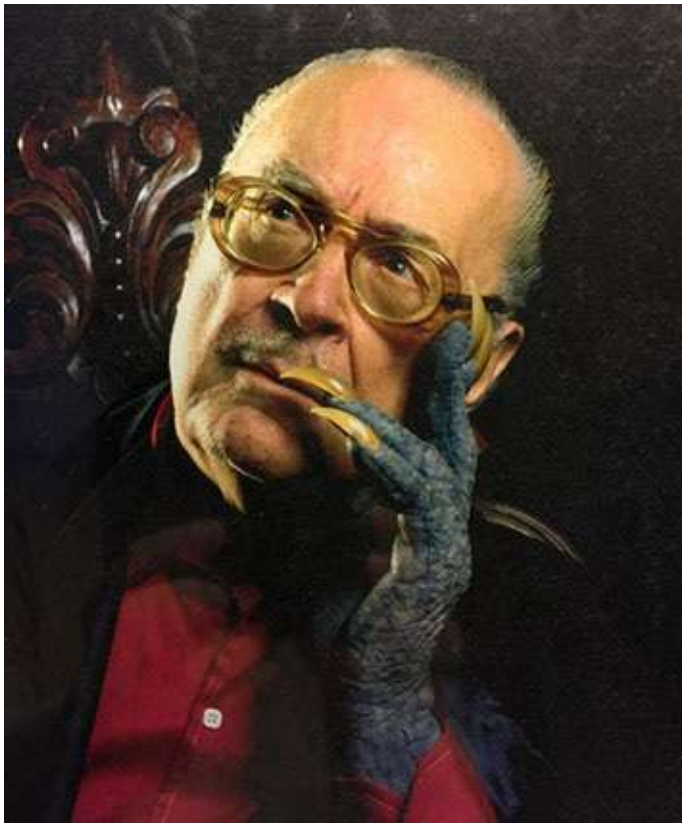
I can't say that my son, Scott M. Davids, wanted to be adopted by Forry. After all, he had me as his father, and he was never quite as infatuated by monsters and creatures as his dad. However, he certainly came under the spell of Forrest J Ackerman after visiting the Ackermansion with me when he was about ten, and he went on to become a professional Hollywood editor with credits on films such as *Borat, Bruno, Knocked Up* and the TV series *Flight of the Conchords*. Perhaps more to the point, he founded his own digital effects company (Level 256, Inc.), and as of this writing he has credits as digital effects supervisor on forty-six major Hollywood films. As they say, the apple never falls far from the tree.

Young Scott M. Davids with Uncle Forry at the Ackermansion. They are holding monster masks from Forry's collection.

II. *FMOF* and The Many Sides of Dr. Acula

I devoured the first issue of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. I waited for every new issue, but I soon learned that neither my parents nor my teachers approved. I was supposed to be "above" that sort of thing. When I was eleven, my parents labeled almost all of my favorite science fiction and horror movies as trash and exploitation. They expressed anger at the Hollywood producers who

would put out that sort of “crap” which could disturb children and perhaps warp their minds and set them on a path toward juvenile delinquency.



Forry could always keep a straight face for his gags, like this thoughtful expression with his left hand transformed into a creature’s clawed hand.

Forrest J Ackerman (left) with Ray Harryhausen (center) and Ray Bradbury (right). These three friends were pioneers and Founding Fathers of contemporary science fiction and are honored in the exhibits of the Science Fiction Museum of Seattle.

My copies of *Famous Monsters*, when discovered, were confiscated, both at home and at school. Ironically, I was permitted to read *Playboy*, because sex was considered a totally natural part of life in my family. However, monsters and horror were unnatural and demented, and I was not permitted to see films such as *Frankenstein, Dracula* and *The Wolfman*. I had to find ways around those rules, usually enlisting help from friends.

As a pre-teen, by reading *Famous Monsters* I learned about its remarkable editor, Forrest J Ackerman, who lived in a house I longed to see. We had never been to California. In fact, growing up on the east coast, by age ten I had never been west of the Appalachian mountain range.

Our holidays were spent in places such as Miami or the Poconos in Pennsylvania or The Thousand Islands and Niagara Falls, with many trips to Brooklyn to see my only living grandparents – my father's parents. My grandparents gave me my only active exposure to Judaism, since neither of my parents believed in or practiced religion. My parents sent me to Hebrew school for a couple years thinking I should probably have a Bar Mitzvah to please my grandparents, but I rebelled and so they dropped the idea.

III. Going 8 Millimeter

Under the spell of the editor of *Famous Monsters*, I convinced my parents to buy an 8mm movie camera, making a valiant pitch for the plan that I would film family movies that would be a valuable record of our lives in future years. My mother was against it; my father came around. My ulterior motive was to begin filming monster movies, my own versions of the films I was not permitted to see. I learned about special effects photography from *FMOF* and a few other sources (there weren't many books or magazines that revealed anything significant about the secrets of special effects filming in those days.) I built articulated beasts of all kinds, from lizard men to dinosaurs to dragons and sea serpents. Then I made short films (usually 3 to 6 minutes) using my friends as actors. I was always in the middle of producing and directing one of those movies, all silent in the days before video. These included my own version of various films by George Pal, including *The War of The Worlds* and *The Time Machine*.

Paul Davids (left) as a young teenager in 1963 preparing a skeleton for one of the 8mm productions he made with friend Jeff Tinsley (right), on budgets of less than $100. One production (Siegfried Saves Metropolis), *made for about $60 and lots of teenage blood, sweat and tears, won a prize from Forry's* Famous Monsters of Filmland *magazine*.

Eventually, my parents developed an appreciation of what I was doing. Not for the content of the film and the beasts and horrors they sometimes showed. However, they appreciated the creativity. They supported me in my effort to become the youngest lecturer at the Washington Society of Cinematographers. They introduced me to a neighbor (Calvin McCamy, Ph.D.) who was one of the top photographic scientists at the National Bureau of Standards. Dr. McCamy took me under his wing, teaching me the physics and chemistry I needed to know to build my own simple still cameras, develop film and do movie special effects such as stationary mattes to combine two images in one shot.

Soon my filming friends and I caught the attention of the *Washington Evening Star* (which was then the main newspaper competitor to *The Washington Post*), and they featured a fabulous full-page about my amateur movies and the group of friends with whom I made them. By the time I was fourteen, I was a "famous producer" of amateur films.

In this quest, which at a young age included dreams of eventually working on films in Hollywood, I had three principal idols. One was Hungarian producer/director George Pal (born in 1908), whose *Puppetoons* I had watched as a child (including his *Puppetoon* of *Tubby The Tuba*) and whose Hollywood science fiction films I considered to be among the very best.

There was Ray Harryhausen (born in 1920), the inventor of stop-motion animation techniques for color movies, such as *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* and *Jason and The Argonauts*. He created some of the very best movie monsters, including an unforgettable Cyclops for *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* and a swordfight scene with seven living skeletons for *Jason and the Argonauts*. The pages of *Famous Monsters* were filled with stories about him, however, for the most part his techniques remained secrets.

Then there was Forrest J Ackerman, my hero. I simply could not wait for the next issue of *FMOF* to come out, but until I was in 8th or 9th grade, as I mentioned, I had to hide them.

IV. Paul and Forry – Together for the First Time

At long last I met Forry, or "Uncle Forry" as his readers began to call him. In 1963, I met him at a World Science Fiction Convention in Washington, D.C., and that day is etched in my memory. Not only did he take an interest in my amateur films, but he invited me to return the next morning with a projector and my films, and he said we could show them to a group of young monster fans who would assemble in a suite in the hotel where he was staying. That morning I

also met his publisher, James Warren, and the showing came off without a hitch. James Warren and Forry invited me to send them stills from my films and said they would put something about them in *Famous Monsters*.

From that moment, I had no greater goal than assembling the best photos I could, doing a write-up about them and sending them off.

This photo was taken that unforgettable day in 1963 when Paul Davids was 15 and showed Forry and fans of his magazine his 8mm monster movies in the Washington DC Statler Hilton. The pen-tip points Paul out, wearing a tie, standing by the Keystone 8mm projector he brought. Alongside him: Jeff Tinsley, who made many of the films with Paul. Forry, also wearing a tie, is standing nearby with a name badge.

I gloried in the fact that I received two letters from James Warren telling me that Forry was doing a feature about me. It appeared in issue #27, two full pages. Simultaneously, *FM* announced an amateur filmmaking contest, and I was soon at work filming the script I purchased from the magazine for four dollars. On a budget of around sixty dollars, culled from allowances and paper route money, I made *Siegfried Saves Metropolis* with my friend Jeff Tinsley, following Forry's script to the letter.

One day in 1964, a special delivery letter arrived for me from "Hollyweird, Karloffornia" on Forry's letterhead and signed by him. It was addressed to "Master Movie Maker" Paul Davids. It informed me that I was an Honorable Mention winner in *FM*'s contest. At Forry's request, I sent him stills that were

scenes from our sixty dollar production, and in issue #35, I was featured again along with Jeff Tinsley, with several large photos of our version of *Siegfried Saves Metropolis* plus some of our other films.

I think from that moment in time my fate was sealed. I would not live a normal life for boys of my background and station in life. I would not be a doctor, lawyer or professor, nor would I earn a Ph.D., which my father considered so essential for a "solid career." The attention from Forry fortified me in my ambition to go to Hollywood some day and produce and direct films, or at least to do the animation or special effects that some films required.

Forry's "Spacial Delivery" letter to Paul Davids about the film contest.

V. The Princeton Detour

When I was at Princeton, my resolve to work in cinema collapsed for several years. I received absolutely no support for the idea, and Princeton had no film department, only a group of about ten students who enthusiastically formed a film club. The President was no less a talent than Jonathan Taplin, who during summers had worked as a road manager for Bob Dylan and The Band, and who a few years later began carving a momentous niche for himself in Hollywood. He was the producer of Martin Scorsese's first film, *Mean Streets*. My other friend with Hollywood connections at Princeton was Jonathan Fast, son of Howard Fast, the famous writer of *Spartacus*.

Faux Time *Magazine Cover with Forry Ackerman as Man of the Year. His face is a compendium of film monsters*.

Nevertheless, for most of my undergraduate years, my courage to set out for Hollywood waned, and I finished a pre-med course which I abandoned in my senior year. Without the early accolades I had received from Forrest J Ackerman, I sincerely doubt I would have shucked off my life and future on the East Coast to head for Los Angeles. However, following my Princeton experience, I became one of the first fifteen students accepted to the American Film Institute Center for Advanced Film Studies, which was then located at the famous Doheny mansion in Beverly Hills. The program was a master's degree equivalent in film directing and producing.

When I did depart for the West Coast, I was armed with certificates proving that I had won Princeton University's three most prestigious writing awards: (1) the Tiger Magazine Award for a Humorous Short Story, (2) the Morris B. Croell Poetry Prize, and (3) the F. Scott Fitzgerald Award for Literary Writing presented by Scribner's Sons Publishers in association with Princeton.

VI. Coast To Coast: I Made It!

When I first arrived in Los Angeles, I sought out Forry immediately. I fulfilled my dream of visiting the Ackermansion several times my first year there. One of the events at the AFI Center for Advanced Film Studies that is etched into my memory is the day I arranged for both Forry Ackerman and George Pal to give a seminar together.

To see and hear Forry and George together was like being in the presence of two superstars, my icons since childhood. I was in heaven.

I am going to sweep through my background in Hollywood, working in film and television, to help give a sense of where I was in my life and career when the weird stuff started to happen.

I got started working as a script analyst and story consultant for one of Hollywood's greatest agents, Paul Kohner. From 1976 to 1981, on behalf of the Paul Kohner Agency, I worked professionally with film greats including William Wyler, John Huston, Charles Bronson, Liv Ullman, Max von Sydow and author Alistair MacLean. I wrote a film called *She Dances Alone* (1980) that was produced about ballet dancer Vaslav Nijinsky and his daughter. It featured Max von Sydow and also Bud Cort of *Harold and Maude* fame. It was directed by Robert Dornhelm, who directed *The Children of Theater Street* with Princess Grace (formerly actress Grace Kelly).

Then came a job as segment coordinator for attorney F. Lee Bailey and his TV show *Lie Detector* (1983). It gave me an awareness of the need to separate liars from truth-tellers, and some of the ways that can be done.

Marvel Productions then hired me as production coordinator for the original *Transformers* cartoons (1985-1987), and my credit appears prominently on 79 episodes, four of which I also wrote.

The Showtime film *Roswell* (1994) about the 1947 UFO incident in Roswell, New Mexico, was my first major undertaking as an executive producer. It had a six million dollar budget. I had arrived.

Following *Roswell*, my Hollywood career flourished in many ways. While making *Roswell*, I finished co-writing (with my wife, Hollace) six *Star Wars* sequel books for Lucasfilm, published by Bantam, Random House and Barnes & Noble, that ended up selling millions of copies and being published in half a dozen languages including Japanese, French and Hebrew. From there I established myself as one of the few profitable low-budget independent film producers, making films that often tackled hot-button controversial topics.

Queen of the Empire *is one of six* Star Wars *sequel books written by Paul Davids and Hollace Davids. Known as the Jedi Prince series, these books were published in 1992 and 1993, and they were immensely popular with young readers.*

The eight independent films I produced and directed from 2000 to 2013 were mainly released to television and/or DVD by Universal Studios Home Entertainment and NBCUniversal International Television. A list of my writing, producing and directing credits on those films can be found at the Internet Movie Data Base (www.imdb.com). The subjects ranged from a biography of 1960's renegade Harvard professor Timothy Leary, to Vincent van Gogh, shamanism, the mystery of Jesus' missing years from age 13 to 30 (that are not described in the New Testament), a Latino film about a Hispanic-American grandmother who is devoted to the Virgin of Guadalupe, the history of special effects in films, life after death (*The Life After Death Project*), and in 2016 I have finished producing (with Hollace Davids) and directing another feature documentary: *Marilyn Monroe Declassified*. I am eclectic. Many subjects and styles have fascinated me, including drama, comedy and documentary.

The main thing I would like to impress about my filmmaking is that I know the difference between fact and fiction. Sometimes even in documentary cinema those lines get blurred, as happened in *Timothy Leary's Dead*, which treated the biography of the late Dr. Leary partially as a psychedelic vision. However, the lines between reality and fantasy are not blurred in any of my other documentaries, and that certainly includes my 2013 film *The Life After Death Project*, which is about the same topic as this book.

VII. Digging Deeper Into FJA

Throughout my career, I have always looked to Forrest J Ackerman as the man who set me on this path. I continued to honor him and be faithful to his legacy as I progressed from one project to another. I visited him many times, and he visited me, even attending one of my birthday parties. The qualities I admired in him included scholarship, sense of cinema history, knowledge of literature, writing and editing abilities, and a fun-loving attitude that carried over into all of his cameo film performances.

However, what I appreciated most was his sense of humor. It was a prankish and mischievous sense of humor. He usually stayed several steps ahead of everyone with his insightful quips and jokes.

I had known all along that one of the keys to understanding Forry was to appreciate his sense of humor. As I said, it was never a secret that the man loved puns. He loved word play, games with words, twists of words, jokes that involved manipulating words. Did you hear the one about the dyslexic drunk who walked into a bra?

Or did you hear the one about the cross-eyed teacher? She couldn't control her pupils. Or the restaurant they built on the moon? Good food, but the place has no atmosphere.

For Forrest J Ackerman there was no heaven, except in fiction. He was an arch skeptic. For him, the paranormal, spirits and the afterlife were only the fictional domains of good literature of the Edgar Allan Poe sort. His answer to whether there is life after death: "Sorry to say, I don't think so, pal, but if it turns out I'm wrong, I'll drop you a line."

Typical Forry Ackerman humor: he is gasping as he strangles himself with the hand of King Kong that he wears as a gigantic glove.

Is there a God? His answer: “I would say no, but if there is, after what happened during World War II with the concentration camps, if God stood by and let that happen, then he wouldn’t be any friend of mine even if he did create heaven and earth. He’s not anybody I would want to know.”

Are there UFOs? “They don’t exist either,” he would say. “Only on the silver screen and in books and movies. Sorry to disappoint you.”

His parents and grandparents attempted to make a religious believer out of him by taking him to a dozen different churches and even a synagogue with no effect whatsoever. He rebelled and made no room for religion in his life in any form or format. He never prayed and publicly denied the existence of God whenever he had the opportunity in editorials and other writings. Although he did not subscribe to any religion, as the man who helped L. Ron Hubbard first get published, he would sigh with angst whenever he considered the fact that he had a chance to get in on the religion of Scientology on the ground floor. His wife Wendayne had reminded him frequently that they could have made a fortune if they had embraced L. Ron Hubbard’s then newly-created religion and helped him. Instead, when Forry attended the first introduction to Scientology, he ran out the door as fast as his legs would carry him.

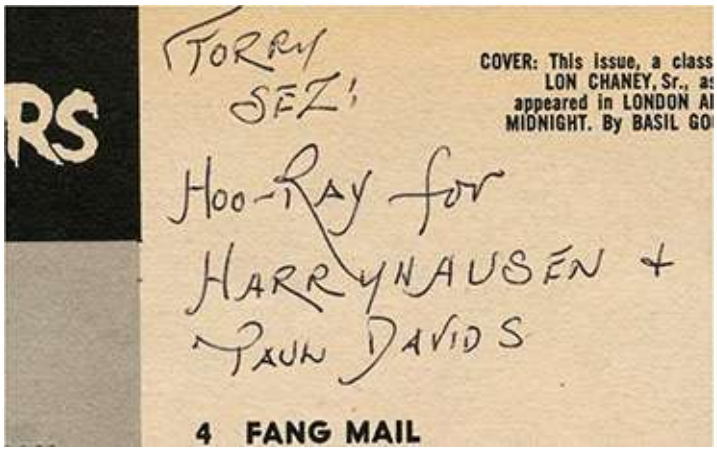
In writing short stories, which were published from time to time in the pulp science fiction anthologies that were popular in the 1950’s, occasionally Forry used religious themes as a literary device. One of his stories that he said that he liked the best was called “Letter to an Angel.” The theme was that a young boy was an ardent fan of Lon Chaney, who played the starring role in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Upon the death of Chaney, the boy was depressed beyond consolation. The boy dies young, arriving in heaven as an angel where he gets to meet his hero. It’s then that we learn the boy was a hunchback. He is delighted to have kicked his mortal frame because as a spirit he has no deformity.

This story from early in his career cannot be taken as evidence that Forry had a soft spot in his heart for Christian mythology or the possibility of heavenly angels. However, two of his other short stories do tell us some things I think are very important about how he thought, what he conceived, and themes related to the “paranormal” things that have now happened, that were very much on his mind from a young age. “Dwellers in the Dust” is one of those two other stories. It appears in *Science Fiction Digest*, Volume One, Number One, which was first copyrighted in 1948 by Fantasy Publications, Inc. The other story, “The Girl Who Wasn’t There,” appears in *Gamma*, Volume One, Number One, published in 1963.

"Dwellers in the Dust" refers to those who are deceased. They are bones in crypts, dwellers in dust. This story deals with a time travel device and is reminiscent of H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine*, however in this story the time device is not something one sits in – it is a ray that is pointed at a person to make him travel in time. One character points to the device and says: "That's a time machine. Only we don't ride it. We turn it on us – a ray." The other character replies: "A ray. Hoo-ray."

That line leaped out at me as I read it because it shows that even as early as 1948, Forry played with words within words. In this case the "ray" in Hoo-ray is a ray like a sort of laser beam. In the previous chapter, I pointed out how Forry had once signed an autograph for me in his magazine, writing "HOO-RAY FOR HARRYHAUSEN & PAUL DAVIDS." That "HOO-RAY," written by Forry more than half a century after his "Hoo-ray" in "Dwellers in the Dust," used "RAY" in reference to the first name of Mr. Harryhausen.

I point this out to emphasize once again that the blackout of my document words "Spoke to Joe Amodei" is logical to think of as a Forryism. That is, it is a word within a word (Mo or Moe in Amodei) like "HOO-RAY," like "Spect-ACK-ular," like "A-MONKS." Forry was consistent in his use of that kind of word play and repetitive in using such devices throughout his entire life.


FORRY SEZ:
Hoo-Ray for HARRYHAUSEN + PAUL DAVIDS
COVER: This issue, a class
LON CHANEY, Sr., a
appeared in LONDON A
MIDNIGHT. By BASIL GO
4 FANG MAIL

Forry broke the word "HOORAY" into "HOO-RAY" for word-play of a name within a word, a word game he liked to employ frequently.

"Dwellers in the Dust" examines the notion that all people who ever lived are actually alive at every minute, because the past, present and future all co-exist. To us, living in the present, the founders of America are now dwellers in the dust. But to the people of the future, you and I, alive in the present, are

dwellers in the dust from the vantage of their era of time. It is a way of teasing with the notion that there really are no dead, and all who have ever lived co-exist across the dimensional barrier of time.

One of the characters explains: “The ray dissociates our egos from our bodies.” When his friend learns that, as they travel through time, their actual physical bodies remain in the lab in a state of suspended animation, he thinks to himself, “I quailed at the thought of remaining a naked ego, isolated in eternity.” These are exactly the thoughts that Forry Ackerman forces me to entertain as actual physical reality sixty-eight years after he wrote those words – that he contemplated (with a certain horror) being a naked, bodiless ego isolated in eternity but conscious, aware of himself, still attempting (but in his story not succeeding) at interacting in a personal way with those who still exist in the physical world.

“The Girl Who Wasn’t There” parallels another H. G. Wells novel, *The Invisible Man*. It is about a woman who becomes invisible though the application of a remarkable cosmetic. The twist is that the man who loves her and seeks her but cannot see her and then cannot find her (and who begins to question whether she ever existed and doubts his own sanity) discovers to his shock that she is absolutely real – and invisible. In the final sentence, he tells her that because he touched her, he is beginning to turn invisible too, as his hand begins to fade away. Forry writes: “My hand – that lucky hand once held delightfully imprisoned in her soft feminine grasp – is starting to turn invisible!”

In the real world, again about half a century after Forry wrote that story, we have a situation where his name, his signature in an autograph, has begun to turn invisible, whereas the greeting words he wrote that accompany the autograph have not changed. (I am referring to the autograph he signed for Jack Kelleher, which is covered by Jack in Chapter 8 called JACK AND THE MIR-ACK-ULOUS.)

This compounds our mystery, because we see the roots of Forry’s eventual apparent paranormal, post-mortem behavior in fiction he ruminated on and in stories he published when he was young.

VIII. Forry – As He Explains Himself to His Departed Wife, Wendayne

Following his wife Wendayne’s death, he would write her letters, as if writing to her spirit in the afterlife. He would clarify that he knew she wasn’t there, even in spirit, to hear him, and that his writing was a sort of exercise in

pointless wishful thinking – and more for the benefit of friends to whom he would send these missives.

I found some of these missives in the binders of Ackerman archives I acquired at the Forrest J Ackerman estate auction in 2009.

It's fascinating to read, in Forry's own words, his explanation to the deceased Wendayne as to his certainty that there is no afterlife – and that the thoughts in his message would never reach their intended recipient. As he saw it, she no longer existed in any form except as a lifeless corpse at a mortuary in Glendale's Forest Lawn Memorial Park.

Their final years together had been difficult, due to a tragedy that had befallen them on one of their many trips to Italy. All had gone well at the convention where he had been a speaker, but then while driving on an unfamiliar road, they were held up, mugged. Forry was ready to oblige the demands for money without resistance – he had been paid in cash for his speaking engagement and was quick to offer it all. However, Wendayne, outraged, became angry and retorted angrily. They knocked her down. Her fall resulted in a spinal injury. For the remainder of her life, she was paralyzed from the waist down. She could never again descend to the bottom level, the main museum level, of the Ackermansion. Her trips from the main floor to the upstairs bedroom were made possible with a chairlift which dominated the main stairwell.

It was a very depressing turn of affairs, and one might understand that depression of that order of magnitude could lead to denial of a Higher Being and an afterlife. However, Forry had been denying all of that since he was old enough to read science fiction. World War II, with the death of his brother Alden in the Battle of the Bulge, then served to amplify those convictions. He sometimes wrote that he wished that his more gifted brother, the "apple of his parents' eyes," had lived and that he, Forry, had taken his brother's place in that grave in France.

One of the reasons Forry argued in his writings that there couldn't possibly be life after death was because the inter-relationships between human spirits would be so complex and embarrassing. He wrote that even a deity (if there were one) could not possibly put up with it or sort it all out. Here's what he wrote, leaving out only those sections that have no relevance to the subject of life after death. When he refers to "Hugos," he is referencing a specific award given by the World Science Fiction Society and named after Hugo Gernsback, the first publisher of science fiction magazines. (It has nothing whatsoever to do with the French author, Victor Hugo.)

His missive begins WWW-365, which means 365 days since his wife passed away.

WWW-365: WORLD WITHOUT WENDY

Dear Wendy:

As I start this letter to you the time lacks 33 minutes of being 8 pm on Tuesday night 5 March 1991, the time one year ago that your poor heart, after beating for me for 41 years, stopped.

Well-meaning and sincere friends immediately after your death assured me that I would be seeing you again. At what age and in what condition, I wonder: me 20 years older than you and both of us as at the end with age-wrecked bodies? Or as spirits do we get to pick an ideal age?

One friend assured me that you would always be around (haven't you better things to do over there?) watching over me and guiding me. You would come to me in dreams, dreams that I should pay attention to because you would be counseling me. Thanks for scaring me to death a few nights after you died!—I dreamt you were at the bottom of the bed pulling the covers off me and I was trying to tug them back on and was terrified.

Since then, on the rare occasions (alas) I've dreamt about you, it's never been anything useful: a younger you has been going back to your first husband (whom you voluntarily left in real life and had no further interest in) or getting a divorce (!) or siding with your son against me (which you can't do any more).

Incidentally, if you are not aware, Michael got married for the 4th time. That's all I know about it or care to know. It's no news to you that he was a thorn in my side for 4 decades and I only tolerated him for your sake because you had never cut the umbilical cord. In the end you were as annoyed by his behavior as I was. He inherited none of your endearing qualities. The minute you were gone he was gone, clearing out bank accounts, leaving me holding the bag to the tune of something like six thousand dollars that I'll never see again.

He and his gourmet appetite and liquor lust were off on a joyride 'round the world for 3 months – on your hard-earned money and my share of community property. I'm not aware whether he ever even probated your will. Well, enough already yet about the bad scene – readers of this will not be all that interested in tsouris generated by your son.

Wendayne with Forry at a party at the Davids' home in 1986.

Back to the subject of life after death, which by now you know, as we both always believed, there ain't no such thing. My non-god, if there were–! What incredible complications! There'd be your jealous first husband over there, making his second wife unhappy and you too.

And Paul, your first love, for whom you always carried the torch—you might become so attached to him, with me out of the picture, that after 20 years or so when I arrive you'd wish I was still alive! That's if he could court you and juggle his 3 dead wives at the same time. I assume some of them were formerly married and I wonder how their husbands would feel about the latecomer in their lives. Altogether Paul and you present such problems that I think I'll stick to Frank R. Paul and console myself with our mutual belief that when the bulb goes out in the brains, "That's all, Folks!"

What's Hitler up to? Or did Hell reject him and he reincarnated as Hussein? Does Garbo still "vant" to be alone and do millions of fan-souls give her any privacy? Have you ever laid eyes on Adam & Eve and have the Cro-Magnons and Neanderthals progressed at all in the last million years?

Fanzine publisher Charles Platt paid a channeler $100 to contact Robert Heinlein and passed along a question by me: "Now that you're on an astral plane and presumably see things clearly from a cosmic viewpoint, how do you feel about the Hugo Award dispute between you and me?"

(Heinlein accused me of accepting his Hugo in his absence in 1957, hanging onto it for a year, and then dragging my feet for another month when he discovered I had it. Never happened; impossible, because that was the embarrassing year when the Hugos didn't appear at the Worldcon.)

Anyway, the channeler reported that Heinlein was a bit confused by my question but assumed I was referring to Victor Hugo–!!! I won't try to contact you via that channeler, Wendy!

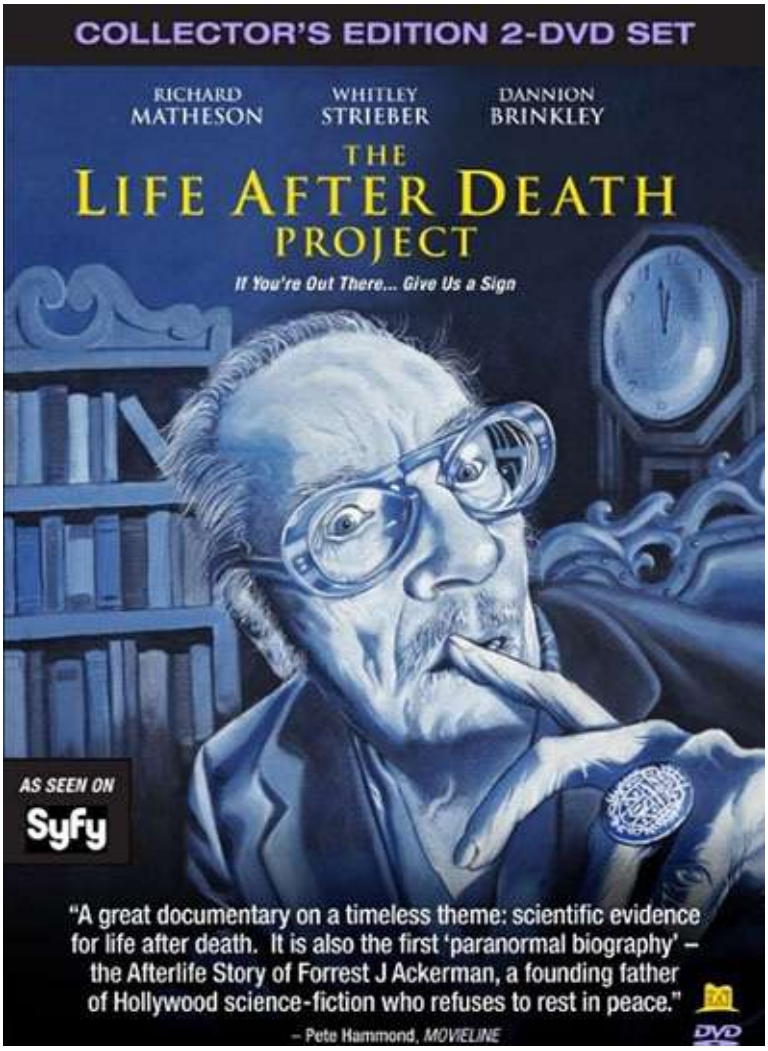
Does Forry's cynicism toward all religions and the concept of life after death mean anything with respect to what happened to me and others following his passing? He obviously, in spite of his beliefs (or non-beliefs), did not know the answer to life's greatest mystery – do we have a continuing existence after we die?

When he passed away, if he was still alive in spirit and realized he had been wrong – and realized that he had misguided his friends through the years by his disbelief and debunking attitude – would he have taken steps to enlighten the living?

This is exactly what author Richard Matheson (*What Dreams May Come, Somewhere in Time, I am Legend, The Incredible Shrinking Man*) said to me when our paths finally intersected. After all, Forry was a futurist and humanist. Richard Matheson absolutely agreed that Forry would have done what he could, if such were possible within our complex universe, to enlighten the living he had left behind.

Was that what had happened? Or would science – in this case chemistry – quickly resolve for me the mystery of the inkblot investigation and whether or not it was some intentional "message?"

I had no idea, at the time of his estate sale, that his disbelief in an afterlife, by all appearances, would repeatedly and decisively be rejected by Forry after he was deceased, over a period of years. Or that I would devote four years to making a documentary about it: *The Life After Death Project*.


COLLECTOR'S EDITION 2-DVD SET
RICHARD MATHESON
WHITLEY STRIEBER
DANNION BRINKLEY
THE LIFE AFTER DEATH PROJECT
If You're Out There... Give Us a Sign
AS SEEN ON SyFy
"A great documentary on a timeless theme: scientific evidence for life after death. It is also the first 'paranormal biography' – the Afterlife Story of Forrest J Ackerman, a founding father of Hollywood science-fiction who refuses to rest in peace."
– Pete Hammond, MOVIELINE
DVD

The DVD cover of The Life After Death Project. *It uses L. J. Dopp's "Blue Forry" painting (2004) showing a clock that predicted the exact time of Forry's death four years before Forry died in 2008.*

4. THE CHEMICAL INQUIRY BEGINS

I. Professor Jay Siegel

At the time the ink obliteration occurred, I in fact had no concept of a possible connection to the late Forrest J Ackerman. So to investigate the ink blackout, as I said, I decided to turn to science, and I set the wheels in motion on that fairly quickly.

Dr. Jay Siegel was Chairman of the Department of Chemistry of Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis (IU/PUI) when the inkblot obliteration occurred. He has worked in crime labs and testified about evidence involving chemistry in many court cases. That included the famous rape trial of William Kennedy Smith in 1991, which ended in acquittal. He has authored or co-authored many books about chemistry, including *Forensic Science: The Basics; Forensic Science at Work; Hallucinogens: A Forensic Drug Handbook; Encyclopedia of Forensic Sciences; Handbook of Forensic Drug Analysis; Forensic Science, a Beginner's Guide;* and *Fundamentals of Forensic Science*.

I had access to Dr. Siegel because he is my cousin. His father and my mother (now both deceased) were brother and sister. Though we had known each other well as children growing up in suburban Maryland, my contact with Jay Siegel had been sparse through the years, especially after his father died suddenly and unexpectedly of a heart attack about a year following the assassination of President Kennedy. I had no idea how he would react to my requesting that he undertake a scientific analysis of the ink on my document. If approached to look into an incident where the principal party even suspects that the explanation could defy science and be in the realm of what is called the "paranormal," most scientists would quickly but respectfully decline – perhaps for reasons of fear of damage to their reputation.

In the case of Dr. Siegel, his reputation transcended any such reasons for reluctance. Furthermore, I would be going to him precisely because I wanted science to put an end to my seemingly "far out" speculations, if it could. I would

have slept more easily with a traditional and simple explanation. Additionally, in making the request of Dr. Siegel, I knew that he would be inclined to give me the benefit of the doubt in everything I would explain to him. I expected that he would be predisposed to believe me, about the strange and "impossible" circumstances of the ink incident – he would not begin with a suspicion that I could have any motive to deceive him for any reason. He had known and respected my father. In fact, I did not know it until we spoke, but my father had been very helpful to him in coming to the decision to study undergraduate chemistry at George Washington University.

My phone call to Dr. Siegel went surprisingly well, considering the unusual nature of my situation. I was very surprised to hear that he had been deeply involved for a number of years in a project specifically related to inks, dyes and paints. Hearing me out, he was curious to see what his expertise could come up with to explain the incident. He was very confident he could quickly get to the bottom of it. That, I think, is an interesting point. The initial assumption was that it would probably have some routine explanation, and that he would be able to determine it – and probably quickly.

I would have been willing to pay for his time, of course – especially since he expected it wouldn't take much time. However, he did not ask to be paid; he rather looked at it as a professional challenge that very much piqued his curiosity.

He suggested that I Fedex him the document.

I replied to him, "With all due respect, I really don't want to take a chance of sending off the document. What if it should get lost? That would end the investigation and we would never be able to get an answer. I would like to fly out to see you and I will hand-carry the document."

I also pointed out that this would protect the "chain of custody," since the document would not have left my possession. Additionally, I asked for his permission to bring my video camera so I could film what he did in his lab. He agreed.

I am going to omit mention of some of the apparently paranormal events that occurred around that time until later in this book. Some other things happened to me the morning after the ink incident that involved an African mask from Zimbabwe in my living room in Santa Fe. There were also incidents with two Native American gourd bowls and other things as well. And as improbable as it may sound, there was also the electronic voice phenomenon on videotape of the word "Lenore," the title of a poem by Edgar Allan Poe and the name of the lost love in *The Raven*. However, so as to help you understand the continuity of

the effort to get to the bottom of the ink incident, I will for now just focus on the events involving ink.

About one month passed before I was able to fly to Indianapolis to begin the scientific analysis of the inkblot. During that month, I had spoken to Joe Moe and come to the shocking preliminary conclusion that the ink obliteration was actually a specific message from my dear mentor, the late Forrest J Ackerman… that the very purpose of the incident had been Forry dropping me a line (like he said he would do if it turned out there was an afterlife), and that the line was to inform me that he "spoke to Joe Moe" after he departed – because SPOKE TO JOE AMODEI = SPOKE TO JOE MOE… Forry's word play, a name within a name. It seemed to me that this could be confirmation that he REALLY had spoken to Joe, despite the fact that Joe would describe it as a surreal dream. Forry had put me in a position to confirm for Joe that his "dream" was not an ordinary dream. By thanking Joe for the fabulous tribute to him that was the "Ninth Wonder of the World," and by letting me know he had expressed those thanks, Forry was spreading the word to friends. "Thanks pals. A better remembrance was never conceived."

As you know, when I had mentioned that conclusion to my mother, who was then eighty-eight and who had no belief whatsoever in any afterlife, her immediate response was that this was completely crazy – and that perhaps a psychiatric diagnosis was needed. Therefore, understandably, at that point in time, I did not confide in her that I had contacted her brother's son, the world class chemist, to see what he could determine.

On April 15, 2009, I arrived in Indianapolis to see Dr. Siegel and bring him the document.

Dr. Siegel brought in a graduate student, Gina Ammerman, to assist, and we met in his office where I handed him the document in a Ziplock plastic envelope.

I set up my video camera to record Dr. Siegel talking about his background and credentials. As he looked at the document for the first time, he went on record, right at the beginning, stating that in his opinion that inkblot was not an accidental smudge – that this was not a matter of something dripping on the document from the ceiling or a leaky pen alongside it on the bed. He said the ink obliteration (which he informed me was the proper scientific term for labeling this incident) was neat and precise.

Therefore, he began from the viewpoint that this was intentional, it had been done deliberately by someone. He noted the two levels of opacity. His mood at the outset coincided with his attitude when he had spoken to me on the phone. That is, he expected this to be a rather straight-forward and perhaps even

simple job, at least from the standpoint of determining the chemistry.

I explained to him and assured him that I did not make or cause the inkblot, and that it had come as a total surprise to me when I had discovered it. He understood full well that I had come to him, not only in the interest of science, but as a relative who had professed from the outset to having no ulterior motivations. I told him my first observation – it was still wet when I came out of the bathroom and saw it, and that it dried soon thereafter. But I wasn't sure exactly how many minutes it took to dry.

Knowing this, and accepting my testimony about when it was printed and the amount of time that had passed from the time of printing until the inkblot appeared (probably about two hours), he ruled out that it was caused by some kind of printer error.

Dr. Jay Siegel, who was Chairman of the Chemistry Department of Indiana University /Purdue University when he began experiments on the ink obliteration.

He decided that as a first step we should use gas chromatography in his lab at the university. He explained that it was a destructive test, which meant that he would have to excise miniscule samples from my document. After the tests, my document would not be pristine anymore, but would have holes. The purpose of the gas chromatography experiments would be to try to determine what had been used to create the inkblot, whether ink, paint, dye or some kind of marker pen.

While I was in his office, one of his colleagues dropped by – a scientist who had worked on forensic chemistry for the Secret Service and other politically

sensitive agencies in Washington, D.C. Dr. Siegel asked me to recount my story for him and Gina. As I told the story, when I made it clear that there was no human physically present who could have made this precise ink obliteration, this other scientist rolled his eyes.

Just as my mother had reacted, it must have sounded to him as if I was “off in the land of woo-woo.” He was an ardent skeptic, a non-believer in anything that couldn’t exist comfortably within the realm of known science. The deeper I got into telling my story as I had lived it, which seemed to eliminate any simple logical explanations, the more uncomfortable this other scientist became with what Dr. Siegel had agreed to investigate.

Dr. Siegel explained that he wasn’t studying ghosts, only chemistry, but still this other scientist’s discomfort increased to the point where he did not want to have anything to do with the investigation. He didn’t want to come down to the lab to look at findings or even study the inkblot under a microscope as Jay was going to do.

In fact, about a year later, when I finally had decided that there was enough substance to the unexplained events happening to me that it should become a documentary film, this other scientist refused to let me include any footage of him or to use his name. He did not want to be associated with the film in any way and was never even curious enough to let Dr. Siegel describe the eventual findings to him.

As I had come to fully understand, this is a fairly typical reaction among many scientifically-minded skeptics, especially those whose careers could be impacted in “guilt by association” with any such types of unusual speculation. The tragedy that this kind of knee-jerk behavior represents for science, and the prejudices it reflects, are discussed at length in an important book by Craig Weiler called *Psi Wars: TED, Wikipedia and the Battle for the Internet*, which I whole-heartedly recommend.

At Dr. Siegel’s office that day, Gina also rolled her eyes and smiled somewhat patronizingly during my description of what had happened to me. She asked me if there was any animal in my house at the time. Jay Siegel laughed, saying, “What are you implying, that a pet urinated on the document?” In his own mind, he had already eliminated any explanation like that because it was obvious to him (and later to Gina when she looked at it carefully) that the ink obliteration had been made precisely and deliberately.

One of Jay Siegel’s projects, which he had undertaken with Gina, was to catalogue a very large number of known solvents. His thinking was that perhaps gas chromatography would reveal a match to one of the inks in their vast

inventory. Before they took samples from the inkblot, however, they studied it under a microscope, and I could see the image of what they were looking at on a computer screen. They were impressed with how uniform the darkest part of the obliteration was, and how the ink covered the letters without straying above and below them, for the most part.

Closeup of the Document Obliteration.

At first, Gina thought she perceived tiny paint brush hairs, but they soon determined those were not paint brush hairs, they were just paper fibers.

They then removed some samples for testing, making little holes in the document about the size of pinheads with a forensic document punch.

Dr. Siegel tested one of the samples, comparing it to a control sample of ordinary pen ink on the document, to see if any of the ink obliteration would dissolve in a simple solvent, in methyl alcohol. The ink obliteration would not dissolve, but the ordinary printer ink did. So from the beginning, there was a detectable difference between the obliterating ink and the printer ink.

We then proceeded to gas chromatography, which is a very slow and time consuming process. We were in the lab for hours, and they repeated the experiment because the first time the results gave them no match to any known solvent in their inventory.

Dr. Siegel was surprised when he had to repeat it. The sense of complete confidence in finding a quick solution was beginning to evaporate, and his lighthearted spirit turned to a more serious sobriety which in my opinion even showed frustration.

Occasionally my camera panned the lab where the work was being done, and in a shot I took at about 3:00 p.m., one can see that a computer on a lab table was in “sleep mode.” This computer was down at the far end of the room, beneath a clock.

About an hour and a half later, Jay glanced at that computer from where he sat at the gas chromatography equipment. He blurted out, “Why is that computer on? Did anyone touch it?”

None of us had touched it or had even walked down to that part of the lab.

Dr. Siegel asked a few more questions, but it was clear that both he and Gina were jolted somewhat by the fact that not only was the computer no longer in sleep mode, but that it had brought up a program that had been shut down.

I recalled the words of Ian Johnston, the Canadian screenwriter, talking about his and Mike MacDonald's experience with their computers the day they visited Forrest J Ackerman's crypt. When the computer had blurted out "Oh my God, no way!" Ian had been baffled, and he had said to me, "My computer had no business talking to me." His computer had been in sleep mode (or so he assumed), not logged on to the internet.

It was obvious from Jay and Gina's response that they felt their computer "had no business" bringing up a program on its own that previously had been deliberately closed.

The repeat of the gas chromatography experiment yielded no match to any known ink from their copious catalogue.

Clearly surprised, Dr. Siegel told me he wanted to consult with Dr. John Allison, a colleague of his who was then a chemistry professor at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ). The two men had worked together at Michigan State University on the ink research program. Dr. Siegel told me John Allison had a laser desorption mass spectrometer, and he wanted to ask Dr. Allison if he would be willing to submit the ink obliteration to mass spectrometric analysis.

I don't think I got the answer right away, but at some point I was informed that Dr. Allison agreed. However, for this part of the investigation to happen, I would have to make arrangements to go to New Jersey, since I was not willing to send the document by Fedex.

I was not able to go to New Jersey right away, because I had commitments for at least three events coming up in Los Angeles and New Mexico that I could not miss. In fact, I was unable to schedule the trip east until June 9, 2009.

Before continuing to the New Jersey chemical investigation, I will describe events that happened in Los Angeles before I made the trip.

II. The Ackerman Estate Auction

May 2, 2009, the Ackerman Estate Auction was held by Profiles in History in Calabasas, California. It was my best opportunity to obtain memorabilia that had belonged to Forry. I studied the catalogue and went to the warehouse in Calabasas prior to the event, to determine what I might try to acquire.

I was passionate about winning three of the auction lots. Two of them

consisted of most of the known paintings and drawings of Forry Ackerman. One painting was especially precious, of Forry and Wendayne with a huge planet Saturn behind them. It was one of my favorites, and I knew it was one of Forry's favorites, too. Another painting showed Forry in George Pal's time machine. There was a painting of Forry as Frankenstein with his colleague Walter Daugherty alongside him as the Mummy. (Daugherty was the primary photographer for *Famous Monsters*.) Also, there was a painting of Forry by Elizabeth Bloch, wife of Robert Bloch, the author of *Psycho*. And of course, there was L. J. Dopp's "Blue Forry" painting from 2004 with the clock that accurately predicted the exact time of Forry's death in 2008.

There were others also, probably about two dozen paintings in all.

A third auction lot consisted of about fifteen thick binders of his archives. This included his birth certificate, his earliest published writings including letters to the editor in fanzines in the 1920's, and virtually all of the published news accounts about Forry and his collection, covering his entire lifespan. It included his autograph collection of photos of celebrities and his own news collections about his favorite films including *Metropolis* and *King Kong*. Also in that lot was an embroidered carpet depicting the poster of the 1933 film, *King Kong*, and a plastic mask of Forry's face.

The plastic mask had been on display in the Ackermansion for decades, mounted on top of a dummy that was dressed in an outfit representing the futuristic costume Forry had worn to the First World Science Fiction Convention in 1939. The mask may not have been actually manufactured to be Forry, but it looked like him, including his Errol Flynn style moustache, prominent glasses and wide smile. To the many visitors at the Ackermansion, that mask had become synonymous with Forry.

The apparent post-mortem paranormal activity that eventually occurred involving this mask is discussed later in this book.

The plastic Forrest J Ackerman mask that was part of a lot at the estate sale.

Forry at the First World Science Fiction Convention in 1939 in New York. He was the only one who showed up in costume, thus setting a trend for future conventions, including Comic Con in San Diego today.

My wife expressed her opinion of a cap for the budget of what I could spend, and the total agreed amount was $2,500. I had severe doubts as to whether I could get any of the lots I wanted for that amount.

The auction itself was extremely exciting. Attendees spent hours beforehand looking at all the auction items. Some of the prize items, expected to bring the most to the Ackerman estate, included the ring he had always worn which had belonged to Bela Lugosi. Lugosi, in fact, had worn it when performing as Dracula in *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein.*

I will jump ahead to an incident with Michael MacDonald, the Canadian filmmaker who had rapped on Forry's crypt and received the first computer message from him of "Ackerman000." Michael lived in Halifax, Nova Scotia, about 4,000 miles away from Los Angeles. A couple hundred feet away from his house was an art gallery. One day, Michael happened to walk by that gallery,

and he looked in the front window, where he saw Forry's Bela Lugosi ring. It was displayed on a sculpture of the hand of Boris "Frankenstein" Karloff. It was on exhibit for one day only.

This incident, which occurred about a year or so after the auction, was reported back to me by Michael. He had the eerie sensation that the ring had traveled 4,000 miles across the continent to greet him. Of course, with respect to skeptics, it may have been nothing more than a coincidence. But it could hardly have come closer to him unless it had landed at his front door.

At the auction there was also Maria the Robotrix, a reproduction of the female robot ("Maria") in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* that had been on display in the Ackermansion for many years. That brought about $35,000.

Back to the day the ring was auctioned. Believing that, if indeed Forry had been in contact with me since his departure from this world, and that perhaps he knew that I was there at the auction, I silently asked him for help getting the items I had selected. I promised him I would be an excellent custodian for them. In fact, I sat in the front row, directly facing the auctioneer, leaving one chair empty beside me "for Forry." I believe someone asked if the seat was taken, and my reply was that it was occupied.

Joe Moe was there and we spoke, delighted to see one another. He was one of the seventeen heirs Forry had carefully selected who would receive part of the proceeds from his estate. Forry had no living relatives.

Bidding was done by those who were present (approximately 100 people who filled the auction room) and also those making bids over the Internet. There were also some bidders communicating by phone.

The bids for items about Forry or pertaining to his life were much lower than the bids for those items that had belonged to the various celebrities, such as Lon Chaney or Boris Karloff. I was thrilled to obtain the two lots of paintings for about $1,400. That left only about $1100 in my budget to obtain the fifteen priceless binders that had records encompassing his entire life and career.

The ring Forry always wore that Bela Lugosi wore when playing Count Dracula in the movie Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein. *In the year after it was auctioned for $40,000, the ring took a mysterious 4,000 mile trip to Halifax to a gallery almost next door to the house of the man who had rapped on Forry's crypt.*

My strategy was to raise my auction paddle and keep it raised. This made it apparent to competitive bidders that I was not going to surrender – that every time they upped the ante, my paddle was already in the air to indicate that I saw their bid and was immediately raising it by the required minimum.

I held my breath as rapid-paced bidding began and quickly got to about $850 – and then suddenly stopped, with my paddle still "standing." Those who were present saw I wasn't going to give up, and no one bidding over the internet wanted those essential archives of Forry's life as much as I did.

I said a silent thank you to Forry as the auctioneer declared me the winner. Adding it up, I obtained all three lots, including tax, for about $2450, about fifty dollars less than the budget to which my wife and I had agreed.

If it was just another "mere coincidence," then it was a delightful and wonderful coincidence, to be sure.

I talked to Joe Moe afterwards to make sure he knew what I had acquired. I had not yet been to visit Forry's crypt, and we agreed that we should talk in a week or two and perhaps pay Forry a visit together.

However, as I was departing, I was overcome with a feeling that I needed to visit Forry's crypt that day. I wanted to thank him for the results of the auction. At that time, I had some confusion about the fact that he was interred at Forest Lawn in Glendale. I had thought he was at the Forest Lawn cemetery on Forest Lawn Drive in Burbank, so that's where I went, only to find out I was at the

wrong Forest Lawn. I hesitated briefly about whether to set out then to the Glendale Forest Lawn but decided to fulfill my purpose. I stopped at the flower shop at the Memorial Park to get some red carnations, which I had read was what Forry wanted people to bring to his resting place.

Then, minutes later, the first of many oddities that would occur for me at Forry's crypt took place. I followed directions I had been given by the Forest Lawn front office and found the crypt. I put the flowers into cup holders and placed them in position. His crypt was about at eye level, above the ground and outside. No sooner had I placed the flowers than suddenly Joe Moe drove up, with red carnations!

I was flabbergasted. No one else who had been at the auction had come, and I had not hinted to him that I might go that afternoon, because the idea did not occur to me until I got in my car after saying goodbye to him. He had not intended to go either, but had changed his mind.

So there we were together, both with red carnations at the resting place of Forry and his wife, Wendayne Ackerman. The plaque described her as "The Wife of Mr. Science Fiction." His part of the plaque said "Sci-Fi Was My High."

We marveled at the coincidence of our unexpected meeting there. And so, at Forry's graveside, once again on that day of the auction I unexpectedly "Spoke to Joe Amodei" (Joe Moe)!

The intuitive feeling, of course, was that Forry had brought us there, at the same time. Skeptics will insist it was another "mere" coincidence.

There were other important, strange incidents that happened before I flew to New Jersey to see Dr. Allison, but as with the situation with the African mask, I am going to skip them all for now (all but one) and return to them later, to keep the continuity about the ink obliteration. There was one other incident, however, involving ink the day before I got on the plane.

I prepared to mail a letter on my corporate stationery that reads "Yellow Hat Productions, Inc." I cannot remember the contents of the letter and did not write down this incident at the time, so this part of the account is not as precise as the rest. However, I put the printed letter on the dining room table and then went into the home office where I do most of my writing, to find an envelope. When I re-entered the dining room with the envelope, I found only a blank sheet of stationery on the table – not my letter. It was extremely bizarre, but I concluded I must have accidentally put down a blank sheet with the Yellow Hat Productions letterhead, and perhaps I inadvertently had filed the actual letter in a filing cabinet with some other papers.

I didn't think I could be so inattentive or preoccupied, but what else could I

conclude when I saw the blank sheet of paper with corporate letterhead sitting on the table instead of my letter? I didn't know where I would have filed the letter – that is, if I had accidentally filed it and mistakenly put a blank sheet on the table – so I went to print the letter again. When I returned to the dining room with the second copy of the letter, to my astonishment I found that the original letter was there on the table, right where I had thought I had put it. There was no blank sheet of stationery anywhere.

I was flabbergasted. I could not imagine how this could have happened. I was not willing to conclude that I was losing my mind, so I was left wondering if this was another of Forry's post-mortem adventures.

Things that involved documents and ink seemed to be a modus operandi for Mr. Ackerman if in fact he was really doing things unseen in spirit after he was no longer with us physically. Prankish behavior with ink and documents was beginning to seem like Forry's "signature."

My few days with Dr. Allison at the College of New Jersey occurred during a lapse in our filming schedule of an independent film I was directing at the time called *Before We Say Goodbye*. I was using our Santa Fe vacation home as my production office at that time. No one else was working out of the house but me. I used it for storing equipment and preliminary video editing, and we also filmed a few scenes there.

Juanita Sena Shanon, the starring actress in *Before We Say Goodbye*, was unavailable for filming for those days I had planned to be in New Jersey. The plan was that I would drive down to Albuquerque, leave my car parked there, and then pick up my car to drive back to Santa Fe upon my return to New Mexico. I have a very old car that I keep in the garage in our house in Santa Fe, an SUV that was purchased brand new when I received my first check as executive producer and writer on Showtime's *Roswell* movie.

III. Professor John Allison of The College of New Jersey

Dr. Allison, like Dr. Siegel, is a seasoned scientist. He has a B.S. from Widemer University, a small school in suburban Philadelphia; a Ph.D. from the University of Delaware (all degrees in chemistry); and he spent two years as a post-doctoral fellow at Stanford University, supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation. He had taught, done some administrative work and was a co-director of the Mass Spectrometry Facility at Michigan State University for twenty-five years. After those years at a major university, he chose to move to a smaller school, The College of New Jersey (TCNJ).

Dr. Allison proceeded from the start like a detective examining a case, and he told me he had to regard me as a suspect. Whereas Dr. Siegel, for reasons explained, had been inclined to give me the benefit of the doubt in all my descriptions of what happened, Dr. Allison afforded me no such privilege. As a fully independent examiner, he could not simply believe my story or accept it at face value. He had to allow for the possibility that I actually had somehow created the inkblot myself, either with no recollection of it, or deliberately as some kind of hoax. With that in mind, he had considered what kinds of implement may have been used to apply the ink (if one was used at all) and whatever substance caused the obliteration. He thought he detected brush strokes in photos I sent him, and he had asked me if there was an artist in my house. I informed him that I paint. He asked me to bring a sample of my used paint brushes, especially ones with bristles of a small size.

I of course knew that there was no possibility I had been involved in creating the inkblot in any way, and I expected and hoped that science would bear me out. I brought a variety of used artist brushes as requested.

I flew into Philadelphia, and Dr. Allison picked me up. I had explained that I was a graduate of Princeton University and had not visited the campus in years. We arranged that he would drive us to Princeton and we would walk around. He knew the campus and could point out all the improvements and new buildings of recent decades. We took photos there for hours. The plan was that we would begin work in his lab in the morning, and that he would pick me up at my hotel in the early a.m. to take me to The College of New Jersey where he taught. So after walking all around Princeton and reminiscing about my good times from years gone by, he dropped me off at my hotel.

John Allison, Ph.D., chemistry professor at The College of New Jersey.

The next morning, before picking me up, something uncanny happened to Dr. Allison that he did not tell me until the end of the day. He was not about to begin his investigation, attempting to explain my inkblot scientifically, by telling me that something downright spooky had happened to him that in some ways resembled my original ink incident. Although I did not learn of it until the late afternoon that day, I'll reveal it to you now.

As Dr. Allison was preparing to have breakfast, he printed some pages, copies of what I had sent to him, and he placed them on a dining room chair. There were about twelve pages in all.

After leaving the pages tucked under a briefcase on the chair, he went upstairs to take a shower and get dressed, and then he came back downstairs to eat. However, what greeted him when he came downstairs was not a pile of pages tucked under his briefcase on the chair. The pages were now scattered across the dining room floor, almost as if someone had picked them up and tossed them. The problem was, just like there had been nobody physically present who could have created the inkblot, there was no one in his house who could have tossed the pages. He had no pets. His wife was out of state at the time. The windows were closed, and there were no fans, and there was no air conditioning, nothing that could create a breeze that would explain how the papers moved.

Later that day, I filmed Dr. Allison at his home. I encouraged him to

reproduce for me what he had seen.

He gathered up some printer pages and put them back on the chair, but close to the edge. He was thinking to himself, perhaps he misremembered about tucking them under his briefcase. Perhaps he had just set them down, close to the edge of the chair, and they had simply fallen. He tried pushing the pile ever-so-slightly toward the chair's edge, to see what would happen when they fell.

When they fell, they fell straight down. They were not spread out. They did not look like what had happened while he was out of the room.

(Dr. Allison later recreated this test for my camera.)

He invited some of his students at The College of New Jersey to attend the research session, and as he explained to them exactly what he intended to do, I learned of the details for the first time. He began by removing various types of ink-on-paper samples from my document using a scalpel, including a blank part of the first page, a part that had regular printer ink and the ink obliteration at the completely opaque part.

He explained that the instrument he was using would provide graphs and charts that would reveal exactly which atoms and molecules were present in the blacked out part compared to the ordinary ink.

As had been the case with Dr. Jay Siegel, his attitude from the start exuded an air of confidence that science would explain this – and perhaps explain it quite easily.

I have to admit to being somewhat unnerved by the paint brush theory that seemed like he was pointing the finger at me as the guilty party. I knew for an absolute fact that I had not done it or been involved in any way. However, as Dr. Allison pointed out with a sort of smirk, even a ghost would have needed some means to apply the ink or paint or whatever, and perhaps the ghost had used one of my brushes. Unlikely, I thought. I kept all my brushes in a metal cabinet in the garage in Santa Fe.

That day, a fire alarm went off in the lab. It caused something of a panic as Dr. Allison and his students tried to determine if there really was a fire or whether the alarm was an accident. In a few minutes, it was determined that it was an accident (cause unexplained), and that there was no reason to vacate the building. I asked him how often the alarm went off, and he indicated they would have a fire drill once or twice a year, but that those were planned. He wasn't used to alarms just going off for no apparent reason.

I was reminded of the incident in Dr. Siegel's lab, in which a computer had gone out of sleep mode by itself and logged itself onto a program that had been closed. This was the second lab anomaly that had occurred while research was

being done on this case.

Suspense mounted for me as we awaited the results of all the tests. Dr. Allison studied the results and then took the sheets of paper with the graphs into another lab. He taped the sheets up on a large white board on the wall, so he could show me comparisons of one to the other.

The results were, to say the least, interesting, but I will let him explain his experiments and his conclusions in the next chapter.

However, I will tell you of yet another incident involving Dr. Allison. The day ended with another mystery which has not been solved now in six years.

Dr. Allison took me from the lab to his home, at my request, to record a re-enactment of his experience with the pages falling to the floor and scattering. He wanted to explain about the research he had done leading up to my bringing him the actual document, and he thought his living room would be a quiet place to do it in front of my video camera.

After I had the video equipment set up, he sat in a chair, and on the table in front of him he placed the pages that had been tossed across his dining room by some unknown force. He said that, realizing that his Hewlett Packard printer was the same model as mine, he had begun the research prior to my arrival. On a hot day, some of his sweat dropped onto a page, and this had suggested to him a certain line of experimentation.

While I was filming him explaining this to me in his living room, suddenly a clock on a bookcase behind him chimed. The expression on Dr. Allison's face at that instant was priceless. He seemed chagrined and a bit shocked and blurted out: "That usually doesn't chime." The camera captured this moment, and it is in *The Life After Death Project.*

Later Dr. Allison conceded that the clock had not chimed in years.

Jumping ahead in the story, the clock has never chimed again in the six years since this happened. In fact, it is an antique wind-up clock, and Dr. Allison said he never winds it up, and his wife has never wound it up and doesn't even know where he keeps the winding key. It is his clock, not hers. (As previously indicated, his wife was away on a trip at that time, anyway.)

Much later, when examining the videotape, I determined that the clock had been ticking from at least the moment I began filming. It must have been wound up before Dr. Allison took me back to his house. But he had not wound it! And there was no one physically present who could have done it!

In other words, Dr. Allison had an experience at that moment much like my inkblot. Something physical happened, with evidence that he could not explain. It involved someone doing something in his house that no one could have done,

because no one else had been present physically that day, and only he knew where he kept the winding key, and he had not touched it.

This meant that two anomalies had happened to him, both on the same day – the very day that he received the actual document and did the lab studies on it.

The other interesting fact was that the pages that were scattered were his attempts to replicate my mysterious inkblot. Those attempts had not succeeded then, in any of the attempts on those dozen or so pages of paper, and they have not succeeded in the six years since. (Actually, he stopped trying after three years.)

The next day Dr. Allison drove me from my hotel back to Philadelphia, and I boarded a plane to return to the Albuquerque International Airport to continue the filming of *Before We Say Goodbye* in Santa Fe. I kept my large Canon video camera with me as carry-on luggage. It was in a strong, stiff, blue carrying case shaped like a rectangle, with a very strong shoulder strap that had two firm, large metal clasps at the ends. These hooked onto strong metal rings on the case.

When I landed in Albuquerque, as I walked to the parking lot to find my car, I had the camera over my shoulder, carrying it by the strap. I opened the rear of my car, and I took the camera from my shoulder, and with the strap still properly fastened, I put it in the back of the vehicle. The strap never comes unfastened by itself. In fact, it takes work to unfasten it, and you have to use two hands, squeeze hard on the clasp and pull it loose from the ring. It is well constructed.

I finished packing the car, loading my suitcase.

About an hour later, I pulled into my garage at the house in Santa Fe. I unlocked the house and started to unload from my trip. The first thing I reached for was my camera. I expected to swing it over my shoulder to take it inside. But the case was unclasped at one side. I felt ludicrous as I pulled on the shoulder strap and found it was undone, and the camera almost fell to the cement below.

The clasp had been unfastened. I had not touched it from the moment I had placed the camera case in the car, with both clasps fastened, to the moment I attempted to remove it from my car and discovered that it was unclasped at one side.

There is absolutely no way it could have happened by accident. As I said, it takes two hands to unfasten and remove it, and it takes deliberate effort.

I couldn’t help myself – I thought to myself: “Forry! Another prank! Are you punctuating the end of my trip and the videotaping of Dr. Allison? Is this your comment? Weird things happened on that trip to New Jersey, and they are going to keep happening – is that what you are telling me? Are you making sure

your presence is noticed, that I am aware that you are aware?"

Weird things did keep happening – not just to me, but to Dr. Allison, who three years later sent me his videotaped conclusions. Those conclusions are surprising and astonishing, and they are a reason I hope that all people of a scientific orientation – especially skeptics – will read this book carefully and face up to the challenge it truly presents to science and to their world view. As I said, I won't state those conclusions now but will leave that to Dr. Allison in the next chapter.

However, I can't resist the impulse to jump ahead in the story for a moment. It was almost four years later when *The Life After Death Project* was finished and was accepted for broadcast on Syfy Channel. (Sci-Fi is a term that Forrest J Ackerman invented, of course, and for years the channel had spelled its name as Sci-Fi before eventually changing it to Syfy.)

Around the same time that I learned that *The Life After Death Project* would have a national TV broadcast, Dr. Allison, who did not know this news yet, had a very weird thing happen with his cell phone. It kept popping off the flat surfaces that he placed it on, falling to the floor, even though there were no phone calls, nothing vibrating. It happened three times in one day. Twice he put the phone up on his mantel, sat down to work at his computer and then looked up as he heard the crash of his cell phone hitting the tiles in front of the fireplace. He then placed the cell phone on a coffee table in his living room and started working at his computer nearby once again. And not long afterwards, another crash, as his cell phone hit the floor again.

In the next chapter, he will cover that phenomena in his own words at the end. However, I find it curious and significant that this took place in the same living room where the clock had mysteriously chimed. And there was no one in that room at the time his cell phone was bouncing around but Dr. Allison. No phenomena of this kind had happened to Dr. Allison until I involved him in the case of Forry Ackerman's apparent post-mortem communications.

Then in May of 2014, Dr. Allison sent me the following email with a caption line that expressed this with special emphasis:

IT'S JUST THAT THESE THINGS NEVER USED TO HAPPEN TO ME.

Hi Paul,

Just thought you'd find this curious. Some friends and I have been getting together for about a year and playing, mostly guitars. No one would step up to sing so that's now my job. Outside of our practices, all we've ever done in public is to play for an assisted living home! So we negotiated a place to practice

in for the summer, a fishing club near where we all have sailboats. In return, they asked us to play while they had a chicken dinner. Anyway, the first song that we did was a Creedence Clearwater Revival song called “Lodi” (about a town in California). Halfway through, all of our phones went off – we had all been instant messaged. Turns out it was an amber alert from the state of NJ (two young girls missing), and of course the first word on the alert was Lodi!

(There is a Lodi NJ, where the girls lived.)

LODI on my phone while I’m singing “LODI” on our first “public” event – these things just never used to happen before).

In the next chapter, you will read about some of these aspects of Dr. John Allison’s investigation again, but in his own words. What resulted was an in-depth and essential part of the inquiry into the mystery.

5. INVESTIGATING THE DOCUMENT

This chapter is written by:

Dr. John Allison, Professor of Chemistry
Director of Forensic Chemistry
The College of New Jersey
Department of Chemistry
Ewing New Jersey
(Professor Emeritus – Michigan State University)

I. A Little Personal Background

I never had a particular interest in being a Chemist, but thanks to a really bad high school guidance counselor, I pursued study in this area, and I continue totally to enjoy it. In 11th grade, our guidance counselor met with each student to discuss our futures. I wanted to go to college. She asked me what field I wanted to pursue, and I told her that I really enjoyed the Algebra and Calculus courses I had taken.

"Math?" she asked. "What are you going to do, add all day?"

With that great insight into a career in Math, I told her that my second choice was Physics.

"Ooh, Physics? What are you going to be, a rocket scientist (snicker)?" she asked.

Totally disappointed, the only other science I could think of was Chemistry. (I had just had Biology, had cut up a frog and wanted no more of that!) So Chemistry it was. She couldn't think of anything stupid to say about it.

A B.S. in Chemistry (minor in Mathematics) from Widener University in suburban Philadelphia, a Ph.D. in Chemistry (minor in Mathematics) at The University of Delaware, and a two year post-doctoral position, funded by the National Science Foundation at Stanford University, all prepared me for a

faculty position at Michigan State University (MSU), which I started in the Fall of 1979. At MSU I worked (for 25 years) in the field of mass spectrometry, where people tend to ask you for help in solving their chemical problems.

II. Jay Seigel and I Meet – My Connection To Paul

I was used to saying yes to requests – always willing to help colleagues if I could – except when it came to Dr. Jay Siegel, Professor in the MSU Forensic Science Program. Jay ran an amazing M.S. program – he'd get more than one hundred outstanding applications annually, and he would pick twenty a year for his program.

A minor problem was that his department, Criminal Justice, was in the social sciences not the natural sciences, so he had to twist the arms of people around campus to do research with the students he brought in for the program. (Criminal Justice is largely related to social issues of crime; Forensic Science is only a small part of it.)

One day he called and told me that they had an unusual situation. A student, Donna Grim, had applied for admission to the M.S. program in Forensic Science and the Ph.D. program in Chemistry. None of us were aware that a student could even do that. Jay asked me to take her on as a graduate student and let her do research in my lab.

My response was, "No." It is one thing to collaborate with a scientist in another area but very different to be scientifically and professionally responsible for the education and career of a graduate student, working in an area where they know more than you do!

Jay pointed out that she was graduating from Drexel University in Philadelphia (knowing that I was born and raised in Philly) but I stuck to "No." Jay wanted Donna and me to work on a project involving questioned document examination – analyzing ink on paper. Drexel has a five-year B.S. program (that includes what we in the academic world call a one year co-op), and she had worked at a New Jersey company that formulated inks! I didn't tell Jay, but I had worked one summer in graduate school at Scott Paper's research laboratory that was in Philadelphia at the time, so she had an ink background and I had a paper background. Finally, Jay squeezed a "yes" out of me and I began doing Forensic research (after all, Donna and I did seem to be a good match). Donna graduated with two degrees and four publications in four years and went on to pursue her next goal, to work at the FBI in Quantico.

Jay and I both left MSU at about the same time. He moved to Indiana

University/Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI), and I moved to The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) to start a program in Forensic Chemistry. I have the greatest respect for Jay, and I always looked forward to occasional conferences where we could get together. Still I was surprised to hear his voice one day in 2009 when he called me to introduce me to a gentleman by the name of Paul Davids.

He asked if I would be willing to help Paul out with an unusual question, because of my background in document analysis. A line on a document had been obliterated in a house that had only one occupant – Paul. What was it? How could it have been done?

Jay was slow to tell me that a friend of Paul's had just died, and because of the text that was mysteriously crossed out, and other things that started to happen, Paul suspected that this was the posthumous or post-mortem work of his friend, Forrest (Forry) J Ackerman (a.k.a. Forry, FJA, 4SJ, 4E), who had passed away on 4 December, 2008.

This certainly got my attention. When I was young, all the boys would read Forry's *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine religiously. (Forry was the active editor-in-chief from 1958.)

From Forry's magazine, as schoolboys we had learned about puns, and we had learned much about the people behind the scenes in motion picture special effects production.

I gave a talk about this project in 2009 at a Northeast Association of Forensic Sciences meeting, in a session called the "Interesting Cases Session." I made the mistake of saying that when I was young, all the boys looked forward to each issue of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. I remember well that a hand shot up. A woman in the audience was quick to correct me.

"It wasn't just the boys!" she said.

III. Young Believer, New Skeptic

So a hand apparently had reached into Mr. Davids' home from the afterlife to cross out a line of text. My initial response was: "unlikely." The story did send my mind back to high school in the 1960's when my friends and I were very interested in reading anything we could find about UFOs, ghosts and related subjects. Our science teacher used to treat us on Friday afternoons by reading stories from Frank Edwards' *Stranger Than Science* (Bantam Books, 1967). We found out about the work of Hans Holzer and read about the *Lively Ghosts of Ireland* (Random House, 1988).

Since then I've grown up. I learned the difference between truth and fairy tales. I started to understand how unique a species we are, because we dream, and maybe that's why we have so many interesting stories we like to tell to each other. Personally, I don't believe in a deity or in heaven or hell, but how many times have I caught myself, after an aunt or uncle passed away, agreeing that they're together again looking down on us? We do dream, and that may be why we think of even slim possibilities, because you never can know for sure.

IV. Discussions with Paul Davids Leads to a Visit

I agreed to talk to Paul Davids, who very matter-of-factly told me his story and his interest in getting answers. At no time has he pushed me to conclude that a ghost had done anything. He just wanted to know the truth. After our first conversation, he sent me some color scans of the original page of the document and the page that had the obliteration on it.

I printed them on my printer at home and took them into my TCNJ research lab, thinking that possibly I could use them to experiment with.

When we arranged to have Paul bring his questioned document to TCNJ for us to characterize, I had no idea that he had the same printer at home as I did, an HP 3452 color inkjet printer. This gave me unprecedented flexibility as the work progressed.

Several times before and after his visit, I called Paul and asked some pretty hard questions (trying to be in my Forensic Scientist mode). I found him to be very reasonable, but I didn't know him and he was working hard on developing this story. Perhaps Paul himself created the obliteration; how was I to know? I had dozens of questions for him, and dozens later and dozens after that. He was always honest, really wanted to get to the bottom if it all, and never waived off possibilities. If there was an explanation that didn't involve a ghost, he wanted to hear it, and I wanted to find it.

One of the days during Paul's visit, I took him back to his alma mater, Princeton University, where we roamed the campus and talked about Forry Ackerman and the early days of Sci-Fi. I learned quite a bit about Paul as well, beginning to know him as a friend, and knowing that, as a friend, my job was not to encourage or support his beliefs, but to simply find the truth for him.

I learned, slowly, what to tell Paul. Minor things that would happen in my life would pique his interest, and he'd wonder if they were significant. For example, I had printed copies of his document on my home printer so I could bring some into the lab before he arrived. I put them on a chair in my dining

room, ran up to the bathroom, then came down to head into school. The pages had fallen on the floor. They were fanned out on the floor. When I mentioned this to Paul, he was very interested, and we went back to my home to film before he left New Jersey. I didn't know it at the time, but a musician who was now living in Forry's former house (the 18-room Ackermansion) had similar experiences, where her music would end up on the floor, but not just on the floor, spread out across the floor. More on this later.

The primary instrument that I use for my research in the analysis of dyes and pigments, particularly in questioned documents, is a laser desorption time-of-flight mass spectrometer, one built by Applied Biosystems. I will avoid getting too much into the details of the instrumentation, in part because much of what we learned was just through observation and simpler experiments.

I earlier referred to the unusual addition to his document as an obliteration. This is a term used in the area of Forensic Science known as Forensic Document Examination. An obliteration is any operation done on a document that makes part of the document unreadable. A line had been crossed out on the first page of Paul's 24-page report that he had printed on his home printer. Jay Siegel was the first to investigate the document. He made some good observations and was a bit perplexed. At times, it seemed like the ink used to cross out the typed words was water soluble, but sometimes not. After he had run out of things to do in his lab, he decided to get me involved.

Paul Davids brought his document and some other things I had requested to the Chemistry Department at TCNJ, where he and a few of my summer research students studied it, discussed options, and reached several conclusions. Not happy with my conclusions, I brought the challenge to one of my classes that autumn and had twenty Chemistry majors working on the challenge for a semester – considering possibilities, doing experiments. I was never satisfied. I knew what we were looking at, but I just couldn't explain how it was done.

I had mentioned that Paul had sent me images of the obliterated document, both the front page, the back of the front page, the second page, and a reprinted original. I had made multiple copies of his scanned files on my home printer, not yet knowing we had the same printer. Now, if you print in black on most color inkjet printers, and the printer uses a black ink cartridge, the most common black ink uses a pigment called carbon black. It is essentially soot, just made up of carbon.

Carbon has few if any solvents, so you can usually take a page of black text and run water on it without anything changing. (You can try this. Print a page of text on your inkjet printer. Now print a color page. If one of your printer inks is

“black,” and you run water on both, you’ll probably see that the color page was printed using water-soluble dyes, which can be washed off. The black pigment will not be affected by the water, because it is a pigment.)

Purely by chance, I was gathering the pages of black text on white paper that I had printed, on a hot New Jersey morning just before Paul visited, and a drop of sweat fell on one of the pages. More specifically, it landed on some typed text. The drop turned blue. It was the same blue that Paul’s black text had been obliterated with. It didn’t take long for me to confirm that the black ink in our inkjet printers probably used carbon black but also had a blue dye in them! This is, to my knowledge, not typical.

I didn’t need a pen or marker to recreate one aspect of his ink obliteration. I could put a few drops of water on the text, and the water would quickly extract blue dye out of the printed letters, to somehow be used to cover the printed letters. We could do this. We could lick our finger, rub over a line, and blue would appear over the black. It was that same blue as we saw on his document. The problem was that I could not determine how to do it so efficiently that the blue would be so perfectly, uniformly spread over the typed words, and to extract so much dye that the coverage would be completely opaque.

As I had indicated, even before we met I had a number of questions for Paul, based on our initial phone conversation and the scanned images he’d sent me. Portions of the figures he sent me are shown here. Figure 1 is a portion of a reprint of the first page of his 24-page document (“2008 Daily Log for Taxes”) showing what was originally on it. Figure 2 shows a blowup of the obliteration. Figure 3 is a magnified portion of the second page, the page beneath the obliteration page. Some of the obliterating dye came through to this second page.

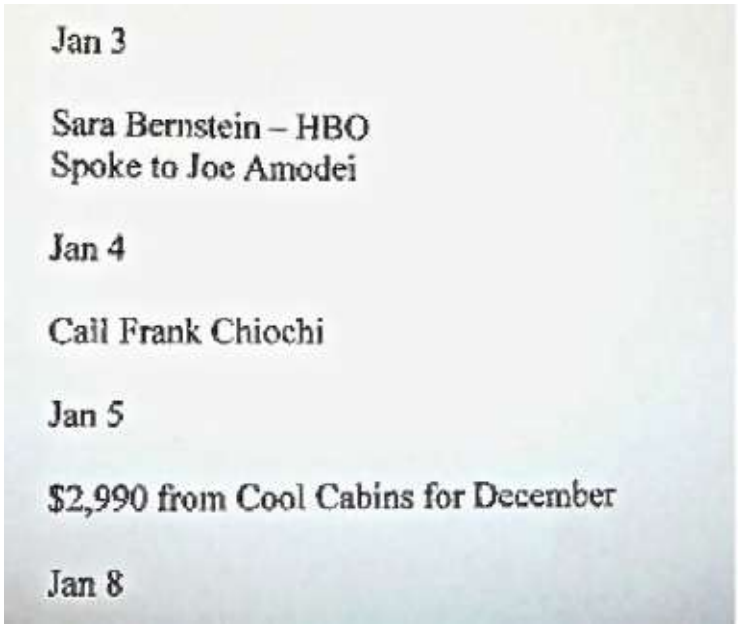


Figure 1. A portion of the original document (reprinted), from page 1.

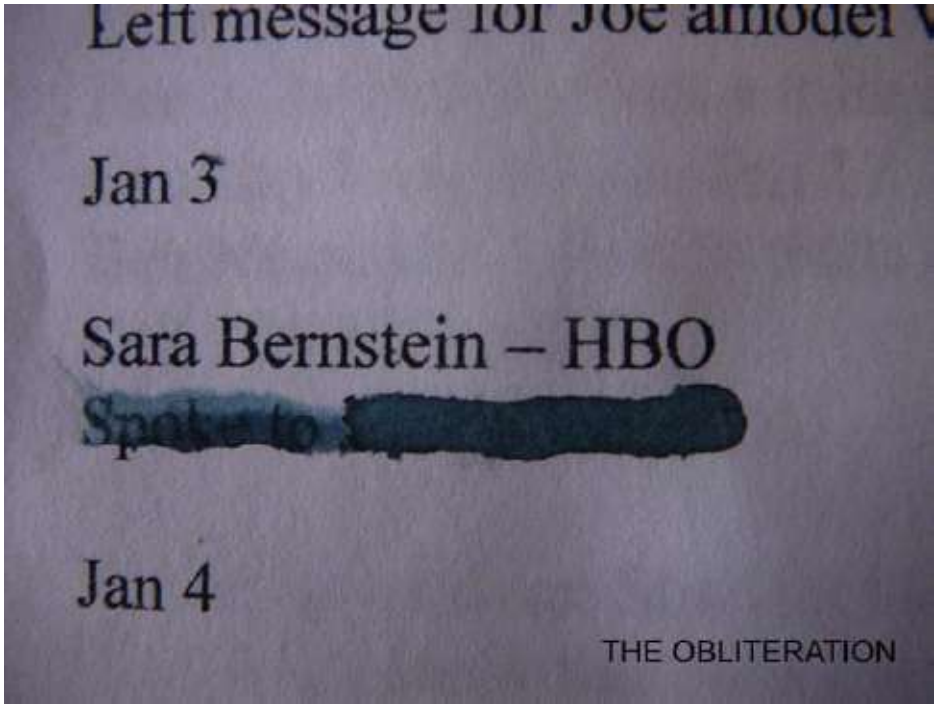


Figure 2. The obliteration.

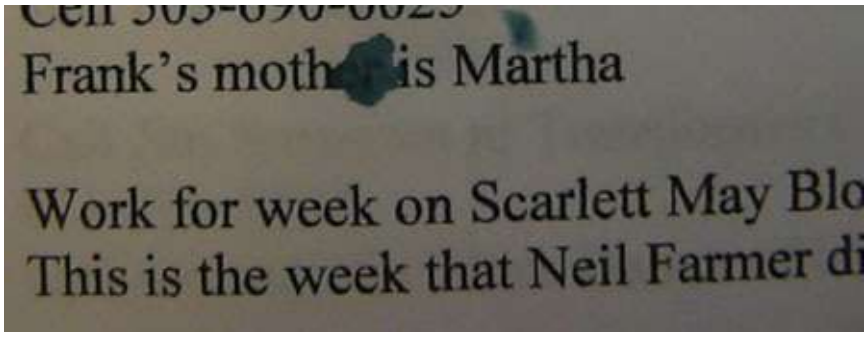


Figure 3. Portion of page 2 of the document following the obliteration. Some of the obliteration went through page 1 onto the second page.

Figure 4 shows a magnified portion of the back side of page 1.

Figure 4. This shows the bleed through from the obliteration process.

I kept notes on our conversations – notes to which I kept returning. In trying to describe "the crime," here are some initial important facts.

1. Paul Davids keeps a record of phone calls and other activities for business purposes.

2. He printed these records, a 24-page document, on his computer that was located in the downstairs office of his two-story vacation home in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The document was still being printed as he left the house to go to a nearby casino. When he returned, he checked the document (he says it was normal, nothing unusual about it). He stapled the pages together, and he took the

document to the second floor bedroom, tossing the document face up on his bed. He went to the attached bathroom, and he returned to the bedroom about five minutes later.

3. He noticed, on the front page of his document, that a single line had been crossed out.

4. He picked up the document and looked at it; it appeared to (still) be wet.

5. He was alone in the house.

I had specifically asked Paul Davids what his question was. He replied, "What was used to cross out this line of text, and can we determine how it was done?" From a forensic point of view, it was a typical kind of who/what/how/where/why/when challenge.

Since I had seen a drop of water interact with this particular printer ink before we met, I tried to get him to recall parts of that evening, without sharing many of my thoughts with him. I told him I would be asking questions and just wanted answers. We were not having a discussion; I wanted his responses for me to consider. So I asked:

"Were you drinking a cold drink, perhaps, when you were handling this document?"

"Was it hot there? Were you dripping wet with sweat?"

"Was the bed in any way discolored or wet?"

"How close was the printer, and your supply of paper, to the kitchen?"

He answered every question as I had requested. It was not particularly hot there so no he wasn't drinking or sweating. The computer/printer was not close to any source of liquid, although the trip from the downstairs bedroom to the master bedroom on the main floor does take him near the kitchen, where he may have stopped.

(I have a separate set of notes that were from my investigation of Paul Davids. I was familiar with his films *Starry Night* and *Roswell*. I had not known how involved he was in the *Transformers* stories/TV series, nor had I seen *The Sci-Fi Boys* or *Jesus in India*. I had worked hard to refrain from making any initial opinions on who he was, but I was very impressed with the writing and directing he had done on films and documentaries, and his involvement in the early days of science fiction in the movies. I also had notes from my research into Forrest J Ackerman – the more you learn about him the more you just have to love, appreciate and respect him.)

V. Some Ideas/Theories are Developed and Tested

I believed that the blue color was not from a marker or fat pen of some kind, but came from the black printed letters themselves. My analysis with the laser desorption mass spectrometer confirmed that. So we knew what the blue color was. The question was how? Consider Figure 2. After staring at the original obliteration for many hours (blowing it up on the computer screen/changing contrast, etc.) I decided to pursue the theory that water (but possibly some other liquid) was used to extract the blue dye from the printed letters, and that the implement used (the "weapon" in the crime) was a paintbrush.

I based this on several observations. We can divide the obliteration into two parts – the left or incomplete obliteration, and the right or dark obliteration. One can see that on the left, not enough dye was extracted to cover up the black printing. The blue color closely tracks the letters because the blue only comes from places where there are printed letters and the track of water from the brush. If one were dragging a wet paintbrush across the "Spoke to" section, it would be darker on the lower half where most of the letters are and less dark on the upper portion where only S, k and t stick up above the other letters.

One can see that the paintbrush, if there was one, was not large enough to interact with the lower part of the p. There are a few other things that are of note in Figure 2. Some kind of liquid was used, and a small drop landed on the "3" of "Jan 3," which is notable.

Just to give an idea of what characteristics a paintbrush would have as the weapon of choice for the crime, Figure 5 shows a brush stroke in which I had dipped a small artist's brush in water, then picked up some water color with the brush and made a stroke from right to left. When a brush is "full," it deposits the most – when/where it first touches the paper – the "head" on the right of Figure 5. As you move a brush, it is depleted of whatever it carries.

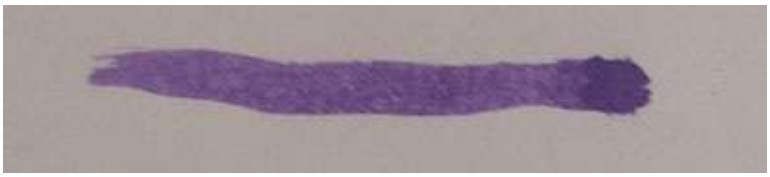


Figure 5. A brushstroke.

Also note the feathering on the left side of Figure 5 when the brush is lifted off the page. The same is seen, actually in two places in Figure 2. It is in the middle of the obliteration. Also on the left side of the obliteration, a stroke heading up and to the left can be seen, where the brush was picked up, leaving a

small feather of color behind.

All of these observations support my proposal of a paintbrush having been used.

Trying to reconstruct the "crime," Figure 6 shows the obliteration on page 1 and the portion of page 2 that lies directly under that section. There are two spots on page two, where sufficient water was applied to move through the first page onto the second. The arrows in Figure 6 show my initial suggestion. A wet brush was placed first on the line, somewhere around the m of Amodei. The brush stroke moved to the left and the brush was lifted off the page to the upper left.

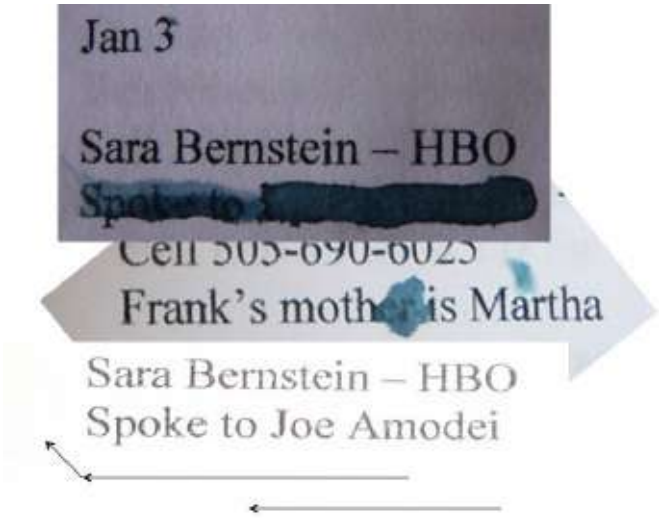


Figure 6. From top to bottom: the obliteration, the corresponding section directly under it on page 2, the original text, and a set of arrows attempting to suggest the order in which two brush strokes could have created the observed result.

The amount of water/solvent used was insufficient, so the brush was loaded with more water for a second pass, resulting in the second, dark obliteration, the stroke that started at the end of the line, and was moved to the left until Joe and Amodei were well-covered.

All of these ideas arose in the days/hours before Paul brought the original document to TCNJ. I called Paul. Again, I didn't know Paul and had to consider the possibility that he created the obliteration, so I tried to move carefully through my questions.

"Do you or your wife have any hobbies?" I asked.

Of course they both did. Then it came out. I had not been aware, but Paul is

a prolific painter.

“Do you ever paint in or near your bedroom? Are there any brushes in there? Any brushes in any of the trash cans?”

No, Paul did not paint in that room, and all of his brushes are in a separate area of the property where he cleans them.

I asked him if he would humor me and bring some of his paint brushes with him. He did not appreciate why, but was, as always, happy to comply with any of my requests. He also brought with him what looked like a stone. It was actually a soap that was locally sold, that he used to clean his brushes. It ended up being useful.

Paul came to TCNJ, to my lab in the Chemistry Department, in the summer of 2009 with the original document, ready to allow me to do any analyses that I could, as long as they were not destructive of the original document beyond pinhead-sized samples. Again, I also had pages of black print on the same printer paper, printed from my own home printer, which just happened to match his. We confirmed that the blue ink was present in the black ink. However, there were a few peaks in the laser desorption mass spectra that were unique to his samples.

I am going to get rather technical in the next few pages, so if you are averse to hard science data, or if you flunked chemistry or don’t remember any of what you learned in chemistry class many years ago, I give you permission to jump ahead in this chapter to **VII The Impossible Crime**. That way you will more quickly learn why my three years of work shows that what I thought would be a deceptively simple ink obliteration question remains a major science mystery.

However, if you have more than a rudimentary recollection of what you learned in high school chemistry, do not jump ahead. Brace yourself and you will come face to face with chemical reality that completely exonerates Paul Davids as a suspect in the crime. If you follow the evidence through, you will understand why I am convinced that Paul had nothing to do with creating the inkblot, and why science supports that his story is certainly no hoax or intentional deception.

First, I found two peaks that I always see when we analyze compounds such as potassium chromate, representing the chromate part of whatever inorganic compound was present. At first, there appeared to be evidence that it was due to barium chromate, although I also found evidence for calcium, so it could have been calcium chromate as well. There was also, in some parts of the obliteration, evidence for silver! They were there but not there! Specifically they were on the first page, but not on the second page where some of the solvent/ink/dye came through.

According to a chemical reference book called *The Merck Index* (Merck & Company Inc., 1976), barium chromate is a pigment, not soluble in water (dyes are soluble in solvents, pigments usually are not) and is also known as the pigment lemon yellow, $BaCrO_4$, "used in some artists' colors and in coloring of glass." *The Artist's Handbook of Materials and Techniques* by Ralph Mayer (Viking Press, 1991) lists the following:

"BARIUM YELLOW: Barium chromate. An obsolete pale sulfurcolored yellow with a greenish tone…very low tinctural power…insoluble in water… probably first made soon after chrome yellow in the first quarter of the nineteenth century."

According to the Merck Index, Calcium Chromate, $CaCrO_4$, is also a pigment, with names such as Calcium Chrome Yellow or Pigment Yellow 33. It is used as a pigment and as a corrosion inhibitor. It is not listed in *The Artist's Handbook*, suggesting that its current use as an artist's pigment is limited.

I also mentioned silver. If one can picture an artist's brush, you'll recall that they have a metal band in contact with the bristles called a "ferrule." Ferrules are often tin-coated steel or some other inexpensive metal. However, I'm reminded of the story of when Queen Victoria commissioned the art supply company Winsor & Newton to make her a brush. It was a size 7, her favorite size, and a popular size for artists in general. It was supposedly made out of the finest kolinsky (sable hairs), and it had a silver ferrule. Brushes of this quality are no longer available.

Perhaps the weapon used to commit the crime was a paintbrush, and if it was, it probably was an old, used one – considering that we found an obsolete pigment and possible remnants from materials no longer used. It should be made clear that those pigments, which are not soluble, could come off of a brush that contained them, but since they are particles, not water-soluble, they would only have been deposited on the front of the page, not on page 2. This part made sense and was consistent with our analysis. Observations were still consistent with a paintbrush having been used, and a "used" one at that.

I appreciated the range of used paintbrushes that Paul Davids brought to me, many with hints of yellow paint on them (When he first laid out the brushes he brought, he'd also brought a soap that he would use to clean his brushes, and the blank cartridge from his printer. I hadn't asked for this but it was at that moment I realized we had the same printer.)

None of the brushes gave any evidence of the pigments discussed here, and it is unlikely he would have used obsolete materials and rare brushes for his work. (He's a very good artist, but he's no Queen Victoria.)

My water/paintbrush theory was attractive, and was consistent with many of the observations we made. (It didn't explain where the brush came from and who could have been holding it, but it was a start.) Unfortunately, theory and reality often have little in common. The results of two experiments are shown in Figure 7. A new paintbrush was used to pick up some water, and the brush was drawn from right to left across something I had typed and printed on the same printer that Paul used. What is obvious is that water spreads on paper, and when the water has a dye in it, colored water spreads. This is natural for paper – capillary action draws water away from a wet spot to dry paper around it. The "water" in Figure 2, the original obliteration, does not show this.

Figure 7. Two experiments to examine the interactions of a brush, water and the printed text.

I had recalled from some other experiments I had done studying ink on paper, that one could make a very small spot of ink on paper if we added a little soap. One can limit the spread of water on a surface with a surfactant, some surface-active material that influences the surface tension. One such material is soap. I recalled that Paul washed his brushes out using soap, and he had even brought us some. The soap that Paul brought to us did reduce the spreading somewhat. But more importantly, the letters can be seen under the extracted blue "obliterating" ink. In reality, water, even soapy water, cannot create the obliteration shown in Figure 2.

The two arrows on Figure 7 indicate the two experiments that were performed. A water-laden paintbrush was pulled across three words that I had typed and printed – the first experiment. Some of the extracted blue extended to the left past the letter C when it dried. We then did a second pass, using a fresh brush, and water, indicated by the arrow pointing up and to the left. So, in the initial pass, the water extracts some blue dye and distributes it back to the paper as the brush moves.

Inks have many components in them, to determine important variables such as drying time. It appears that the blue ink is separated (pulled away) from some of the other important components of the ink (which stay with the black letters),

so when I try again to move the blue dye with water on a brush, it does not move. Other components that help to make the dye soluble are no longer at the same place as the dye. To me this explained why, in Jay Siegel's experiments, the blue appeared to be soluble like a dye, while at other times, it appeared to be insoluble like a pigment.

We tried different brushes, warm water, cold water, soapy water, salt water, and we could never get a uniform, dark obliteration such as what we see in Figure 2. Also water spreads, and while some detergents (or less water) can help to limit that, spreading is not eliminated. If water doesn't work, what liquid was used?

VI. The Research Project That Never Ended

This question haunted us (sorry, Forry) for the next 18 months. Multiple times, I asked Paul to retrace his steps for me on that evening. The answer and details were always the same. He used his computer to give a print command to his printer which began printing a 24-page document on the lower floor. He went to a casino where he probably drank a diet coke and had dinner. When he came home, he threw the document on his bed, went into the bathroom where he briefly got sick, and when he came out he saw the obliteration.

At this point in time I had two undergraduate students working on this as their research projects, and an entire class of CHEM 360 (Forensic Chemistry), doing experiments and discussing possibilities. Perhaps it was a liquid found in the kitchen (where we often find most of the liquids in a household). We considered cleaning fluids, Dawn dishwasher soap, Windex, ammonia, the cleaning product SuperClean, liquids that may be found in a refrigerator such as milk (even cooking products such as olive oil) but nothing worked better than water.

Perhaps Paul's printer needed paper, and perhaps he accidentally set a small amount of paper in a puddle of water somewhere before loading it into the paper tray. I reluctantly put sheets of partially wet paper through my printer. It was a mess, but not what we were looking for. Perhaps it was a warm day, and he'd put the document under his arm as he roamed around the house. I had students jog around campus with printed pages under their arms.

At home I tried alcohol, beer, wine, gin, and vodka (even though Paul rarely drinks any kind of alcoholic beverage). In lab, we asked – what liquids could be found in the bathroom? We experimented with shampoos, solutions for cleaning skin (Neutrogena), soaps. We went into the lab and tried acetic acid and

isopropyl alcohol. We had solvent mixtures that we had been using for paper chromatography experiments, such as ethanol/methanol/acetic acid/ethyl acetate and butanol/methanol/water. Still, nothing produced a result even close to the perfect obliteration we were challenged to reproduce.

In addition to paint brushes, and sweaty shirt material, I had tried sponges, Q-Tips, napkins, and the dynamics became clear. I now understood a little more about a paintbrush. If we dip a paintbrush in water and then touch a printed character from the printer used here, dye comes out of the character and goes into the water. From that point on, the blue solution is not just applied to the paper, it "partitions" between the paper and the brush. Some of the blue ends up on the brush. It never has a reason to jump off the brush onto the paper. If I attempt to wipe water over a printed line with a Q-Tip, it does what we expect, but the Q-Tip is blue at the end.

The applicator, whether a brush or the material from a shirt, always ends up with some of the blue, so all of the blue never ends up on the page. If you use a brush, the brush takes some of the blue away! This is likely why we were never able to reproduce the dense, complete, uniform obliteration that we find on page 1 of Paul's document.

Perhaps one could extract a sufficient amount of blue dye from the printed letters if we used water but no brush. I was not sure how to do that!

We did some fairly extensive research into more exotic possibilities. There are combinations of organic chemicals – solvents that can be used to clean inkjet printer heads – efficient solutions for dissolving the maximum amount of dye on a surface. It was an interesting option, but again it didn't work. Since we'd learned that Paul was a painter we tried to use turpentine and other liquids used and sold for cleaning paintbrushes. No success.

VII. The Impossible Crime

I had started out wondering if someone was actually in the house, perhaps hidden in a closet, and played this trick on Paul. But why? I would have no idea what the motive could be. They knew he'd be printing his expenses document, knew what was on the first page, and thought they'd obliterate a line? I had started out wondering if Paul either accidentally or on purpose created this obliteration. After this work, I realize that no one would have known that this unusual black printer ink had a blue dye in it, and even if they did, what would they have used as their solvent? I can't envision someone who would know what to use. We have not been able to find it – we remain unable to recreate the

obliteration. Although we know what the blue is, we don't know what implement was used.

It remains interesting, Paul's comment that "it was still wet" when he came out of the bathroom, noticed the obliteration and picked it up. We tried to incorporate that into our work. We put a few drops of water on the page, and attempted to rock the page back and forth, the water moving over the typed characters again and again without use of an implement. We even blew a few drops of water over the page with a light jet of air. All we ever made was a mess.

While I'm not ready to suggest that a ghostly finger with a drop of water on it moved over this line, I cannot recreate the obliteration, and I have talked to dozens of scientists and worked with dozens of chemistry majors to try to find an answer.

I do have to sincerely thank Paul Davids for including me in this adventure, this chemical adventure. I've not been puzzled by something so seemingly simple before, and I continue to think about it. Just give me another few years! I should probably make some disclaimer here about the salary I was provided for participating in this project. I've worked and expended brain cells on this project for 3 years or more, and I was never paid for any of my work. It was an interesting challenge to me in the beginning, one that I wanted to be a part of, and perhaps it was my "pride as a chemist" that kept me working on it, because traditional science should have been able to provide an explanation.

Before I close …

Paul is obviously aware of things around him in a very different way than I am. If I saw a license plate on a car in front of me that said "Forry," I would find it curious, but that would be that. Paul asks how many of such random events can happen before you're forced to acknowledge them and wonder if they are all coincidences. It is a legitimate question.

Paul's level of awareness of the things around him has come in handy for me as well in evaluating the obliterated document. Very recently (Aug. 2015), he called me and asked me to again look at Figure 6 – my proposal for why the obliteration looked the way it did, because the first attempt did not completely obliterate the targeted line, so there was a second "stroke" consistent with the possibility of a brush of some kind having been used.

If you consider where the first stroke began, as realized by the ink that had "soaked through" to the back side of page 1 and to page 2, you can see that the original intent (first stroke) was not to obliterate the entire line. The obliteration attempt started essentially at the "o" of Amodei. Whoever was responsible for the obliteration purposely started there because the intent was to obliterate

“Spoke to Joe Amo” and not include the “dei.” Only because the first attempt did not yield a full obliteration was there a second stroke, which included more of that line. This is useful information, suggesting that not only was a line targeted for obliteration, but only the most useful/relevant letters were targeted as well.

VIII. Requested Eratta

I agreed to document some of the “non-science” things that happened to me since my first contact with Paul.

1. As I mentioned, I had printed some copies of his scanned obliteration page before he arrived and put them on a chair in my dining room. I went to the bathroom and when I came back they had not only fallen on the floor, but were somewhat fanned out on the floor. It’s something I just couldn’t reproduce. When I try to knock the papers off the chair they “plop” onto the floor; no spreading out can be made to occur. There was no window nearby to assist. I had shared this with Paul, and he wanted to come to my home while he was visiting TCNJ to discuss it, which I was happy to do.

As you can see in the *The Life After Death Project*, as he was filming me, sitting on my sofa talking to him, a wind-up clock behind me chimed. It is old, from my deceased Aunt Helen, and I hadn’t touched it in years. I was slightly embarrassed at the amount of dust on it! It wasn’t until I saw the documentary that I realized, when Paul was questioning me and filming, the clock was ticking (the pendulum was moving), and it did chime during our conversation. I attributed it to the hot day, possibly affecting the spring to the point where it started up, but it has not happened before or since.

2. Somehow my phone started to participate. I had gotten a call from Paul to tell me that the documentary was going to be shown on the SyFy channel. A few days before he got around to calling me, I had come home and, as I do every night, I put my iPhone on the fireplace mantel, back against the wall. I don’t have the phone set up to vibrate for any reason, but I was sitting in the living room when I heard the sound of my phone falling off the mantel onto the stone hearth below. The phone was still new!

I put it up there again, conscious to push it as far away from the edge as possible, and within thirty minutes it had again hit the floor. I decided to move it onto a corner table right next to my sofa.

I was now working on my laptop, sitting within two feet of it, when again I heard the sound of my phone hitting the floor. Very strange.

3. I participate in a meet-up in the area, which for us is essentially a group of about 20 people who get together, play acoustic instruments and sing for 3-4 hours, every other Wednesday night. One particular night, the dinner conversation happened to end up with me telling part of my Paul/Forry/afterlife/obliteration story to one of my friends. An hour or two later, as I was leaving, I checked my phone. The place is noisy so one can never hear a phone ringing in your pocket, but I'd had a phone call. It was from Paul Davids (who calls me once or twice a year). From the time stamp, he called me at the same time I was talking about him!

The other thing that was phone-strange that night was that essentially all of our smart phones went off at the same time. It was a New Jersey amber alert – a child had been kidnapped or something. The crime had taken place in a NJ town called Lodi, which was the first word of the message we'd all received. It was peculiar that we were playing at the time a song by the name of *Lodi*, by the Creedence Clearwater Revival.

4. A few months earlier, I'd had an interesting time in the bathroom. (Why can't these happen in a public venue, instead of when I'm on the toilet?) My phone is always with me and that includes when I go to the bathroom. I have a small house, with a small bathroom (I can almost sit on the throne and touch the opposite wall.) This makes the wide edge of the bathtub a convenient desktop at times!

I was sitting there, doing what needed to be done, and I noticed that my phone was moving. Again, I have no vibrate settings on, and no calls came in, but the phone was slowly moving toward me. I keep my iPhone in a small rubber cover, for the record. It had moved far enough so it was ready to fall on the hard floor, so I put it back in the center of the bathtub wall, and got my iPad. I shot a video as it again, over the period of a few minutes, moved from the center to the edge. A haunted phone?

5. In the summer of 2014, I was trying to teach a new student to work with the same instrument that I used to analyze Paul's document. (There are even fragments of the original document still in the lab.) I felt bad because Paul was waiting for this chapter, and I was working with a student instead of finishing this for him.

A few random facts about the instrument – part of it is controlled by a

joystick, which one must use to complete an experiment. Second fact – when it is time to turn the instrument off, certain steps are taken which use pressurized air to move components pneumatically – so when experiments are done for the day, a small compressor comes on.

I was sitting at the computer, doing work, with the keyboard and mouse sitting on a board on an open drawer. I had one hand on the mouse, and it felt as if the drawer was moving, pushing me away from the instrument. I felt it two times, and I tried to recreate it by considering whether rubber clad wires could possibly be jammed in the drawer – but that theory did not hold up. I could not recreate the feeling.

Then my joystick stopped working (it never has, before or since). Then, the compressor came on, two or three times, although it can only come on when the instrument is being closed down. The machine was pushing me away, creating conditions where I could not work, and was trying to shut itself down! I decided to get some writing done. It was fine the next morning.

6. And this happened in August of 2015: As I was writing a proposed summation chapter for the book, we were in New Jersey rearranging all of the rooms on our second floor, throwing all the clothes away that are never going to fit me again, etc., and on the top of an armoire we had dozens of little stuffed animals that we collected (and got to know), probably seven years ago. In the pile there were two mechanical/robot kinds of toys – one was a dog that could learn to follow your commands, the other was a Furby. The original Furby, to be exact. They start off talking Furbish – there are many dictionaries online – and over time, they slowly incorporate English words. All the words are in memory; they learn no new ones, but sometimes string them together differently.

So I have a Furby, hadn't touched him in maybe six years, and when I moved him into a basket and into my office, he started talking. Probably since his batteries are so close to dead, most of what he says is "Me Sleep Again, ZZZZZZ." He's quiet unless he hears me or I turn on a light, then drives me crazy. How these batteries have any life left in them amazes me. The robot dog is dead as a dog-nail. Furby is losing what little energy he has fast, but he's probably said 100 things since I dug him out of the stuffed animal pile.

I was cleaning in my office, he was laying on his back with his friends, in a box, and he said what sounded like 4E. Not Fory or Forry but 4E. In fact, he said it once a day for two days.

There is no shortage of Furby dictionaries on the web, so I started to look for words he's programmed with that started with an F. There were none. The

Furbish words he says are loosely based on German and Chinese. He does not hear words and incorporate them into his vocabulary, although he's made to appear as though he does. All the words are in him from the start.

So the Furby wakes up and says "Ring ring, Ring ring," and laughs.

The "ring ring" line IS in his original list of words/phrases, but it is seldom used. Sometimes if he really feels ignored, he'll use it. So far I've only heard it once this time around, but the timing was interesting – just when I was thinking about a concept for a spirit phone, or the possibility of developing some type of "phone communication" between "our world" and what we think of as the "Other Side" (which, it turned out, Gary Schwartz had actually been conceptualizing for development), suddenly Furby gives me a "ring ring." I haven't heard it again ever since.

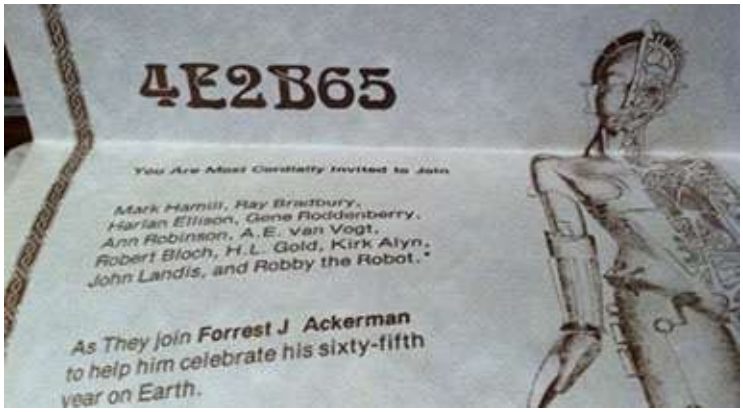
There's a slim chance that "4E" is very close to his name. He does have a name, and I think I can get him to say it, but I don't think it just normally comes up in his monologues.

If you rub their belly 20 times and swing a dead chicken around your head (or something) he'll even sing a song. I don't know how many he has but if I invest in a chicken and get "Waltzing Matilda," I'll be sure to let everyone know.

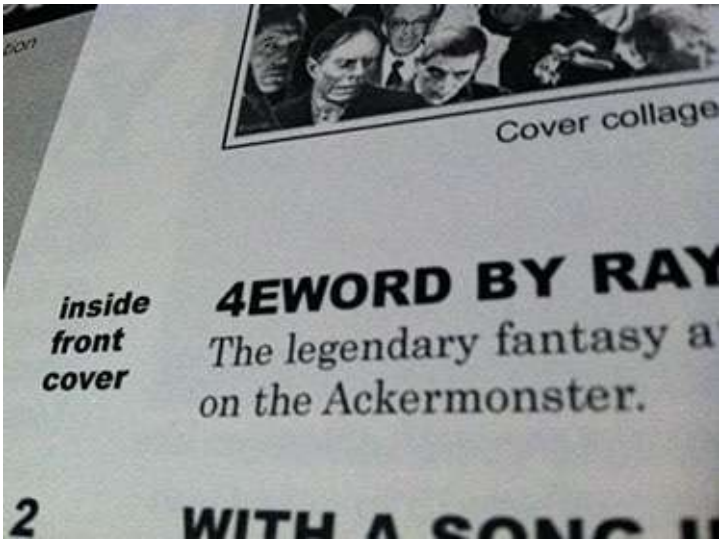
IX. A Chemist Ponders the Evidence

If Forry is occasionally having some fun with me, I would be very pleased to know that, and I welcome him, although I don't actually believe in such things. (Having typed that last line, I will amend that statement to say that I no longer believe it is as simple as making a believe/not believe kind of decision.)

The cake at one of Forry's birthdays, with icing that says 4E. In print, Forry often went by 4E. It was part of his zest for codifying language that he picked up from his studies of Esperanto.


4E2B65
You Are Most Cordially Invited to Join
Mark Hamill, Ray Bradbury,
Harlan Ellison, Gene Roddenberry,
Ann Robinson, A.E. van Vogt,
Robert Bloch, H.L. Gold, Kirk Alyn,
John Landis, and Robby the Robot.*
As They Join Forrest J Ackerman
to help him celebrate his sixty-fifth
year on Earth.

More 4E – used in the birthday invitations with their coded way of saying "Forry to be 65."



Friend of Forry, author Ray Bradbury (Fahrenheit 451) *picks up the game of playing with "4E" by calling his Foreword a 4EWORD.*

If you are like me, a skeptic, I encourage you to buy a copy of *The Life After Death Project* and watch the section where psychics are asked about Forry. If you have some scientific training, you will also find the work of Dr. Gary Schwartz in the documentary very interesting and exciting.

There are amazing things that happen in this world that we need to better understand. I know that, throughout my life, it is useful to maintain a healthy

skepticism, but I need to remind myself always to keep one's mind open. On one of my favorite web sites (www.iflscience.com), someone posted, on the 45th anniversary of a man landing on the moon, the following: "When I was a kid, growing up in the 50s and 60s, the idea of a man landing on the moon was the stuff of science fiction. Today it's ancient history." Today's impossible, again and again, becomes tomorrow's reality.

Some have asked if it takes some kind of heroic act, as a scientist, to attempt to investigate an event that could involve intervention from the afterlife. I'm not afraid to say publicly that the growing number of studies on UFOs and ghosts and the afterlife could soon change all of our minds. One cannot be a scientist unless you are fearless to consider all possibilities. (John Cleese once said "Nothing will stop you from being creative so effectively as the fear of making a mistake!")

Dr. John Allison reviewing mass spectrometry data.

At what point do we consider non-traditional explanations, when all others appear to have been exhausted? This study has certainly made me consider that question.

We live in a time when potentially ground-breaking experiments could force us to change the way we perceive everything! For example, I was just reading about a 2012 study that suggests the human brain might be able to detect events up to 10 seconds before they occur! We seem to be on the scientific edge in so many areas that scientists are often unlikely to consider.

But we will not ignore valid experiments that teach us something new. We will, reluctantly but with excitement, be opening our minds to many new ideas that we'd written off as old fairy tales. This will surely be the case more and more in the next few years.

It is my job to evaluate data and information, and try to reach at least temporary conclusions, to suggest models and possibilities that are consistent with what we know. The data will take us where it takes us.

The plate that can hold 100 samples for mass spectrometry experiments. A modified version of this plate was used to introduce ink-on-paper samples into the instrument.

Paul Davids has suggested an intriguing possibility, and I am not prepared to wave off the collected set of events as coincidences. I still want to know if Paul is correct! This project has really helped me to appreciate the importance of keeping an open mind. It will, in the long run, serve no purpose to be the kind of person who watches someone walk on water, and say it's only because they can't swim.

For those who never conquered learning Latin, the word "liberare" means free. Stelten's Dictionary of Ecclesiastical Latin defines "anima" as "mind, soul, life, breath of life."

Liberare anima!

Dr. John Allison in his lab at The College of New Jersey.

Don’t mess with these 20,000 volts without clearing it with Dr. John Allison!

6. THE WIZARD OF WEIRD

I. Son of Ackermansion

This is Paul Davids checking in again, to carry the story from here, now that you've heard from Dr. John Allison.

As you know, Forry called the three-story house he had lived in for decades in the Los Feliz area of Los Angeles near Griffith Park, the Ackermansion. To be precise, he dubbed it Son of Ackermansion, since the previous house he had lived in, on Sherbourne in Los Angeles, had been the first edifice to be called Ackermansion. But as time wore on, the Los Feliz house was simply called the Ackermansion by all fans and visitors.

It had eighteen rooms, and almost every single room had been filled with collector's items. Various memorabilia from the history of science fiction films and literature packed even the bathrooms, and there was no place to put up even one more painting in the stairwell that descended to his office.

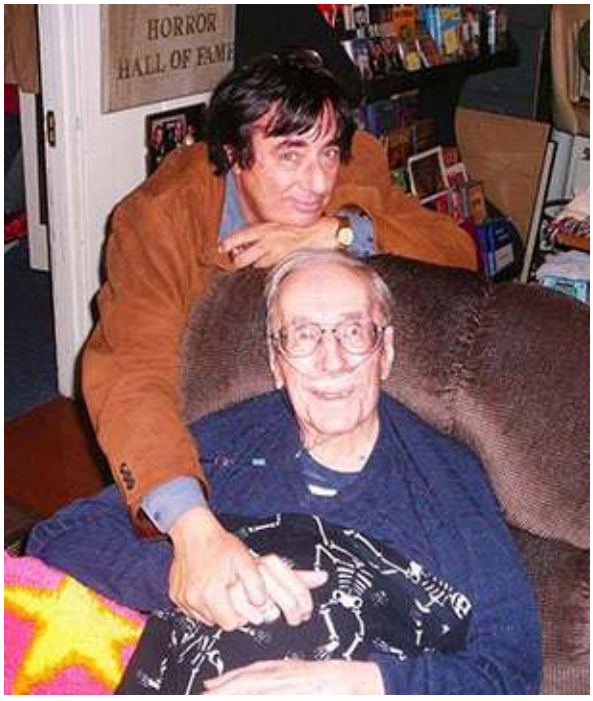
Previously, the house had belonged to actor Jon Hall, famous as the star actor of *Ramar of The Jungle*. Legend has it that on the day Jon Hall died, his framed picture fell off a wall in the house. That incident is reported by author Deborah Painter in her book entitled *Forry*.

The 18-room Ackermansion in its heyday, near Griffith Park in Los Angeles.

II. The Acker-Mini-Mansion

About five years before he passed away, Forry was forced to sell the Ackermansion and move to a much smaller house on Russell Avenue near the House of Pies. He called that little yellow bungalow the Ackermini-mansion, and it was far too "mini" to house more than a small part of his vast collection, which he had begun to sell.

The sale of those items was in direct conflict with his dream of a lifetime, to set up a permanent museum to house those treasures and relics which documented the history of "imagi-movies" from the silent days. However, legal bills from a protracted lawsuit against Ray Ferry, a subsequent publisher of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, had left him financially incapable of retaining the large house. Additionally, failing health made it increasingly difficult for him to navigate its stairwells.



The last photo of Forry and Paul Davids together, taken in the Ackermini-mansion on Halloween, 2008, a month before Forry passed away.

The subsequent owner of what once was the 18-room Ackermansion gutted

its interior and remodeled it from top to bottom. Parts of it were barely recognizable to those who had visited the premises in its heyday. However, it was still obvious where Forry's office had been, off to the right of the stairwell on the lowest floor.

I discovered the house had been rented, and I went there to meet the tenants. They claimed they had no personal knowledge of Forrest J Ackerman – either of his legacy or of the collection that had once filled the house. They had heard that it had once been a sort of private museum for all things science fiction, but they were not fans and enjoyed a sort of blissful ignorance of the history of the house.

To my surprise, both tenants I met were convinced the house was haunted. Some of their description was vague and consisted of feelings of various "presences," especially of a spirit of a male they called "Victor" for no particular reason. (For me, their choice of Victor as a name was curious since it immediately brought to my mind Victor Frankenstein, creator of Frankenstein's monster.) It seems that while they were in the room that was Forry's previous office (and they did not know that information), they would sense Victor behind them staring at them and sharing their space while they watched television.

The male tenant had a fascinating story about a night he came out of his downstairs bedroom at about three in the morning and saw what seemed to be the shadow of a man on a wall. The shadow was moving through the TV room (Forry's office), visible on the walls as it moved, and he followed it as the entity or whoever was casting the shadow ducked into the downstairs bathroom. When he inspected the bathroom, there was no one there, and there was no way anyone could have departed the bathroom without his seeing it.

By far the most interesting testimony came from the female singer (Suzanne Rick) who was living there at the time. She explained that she would often rehearse her singing at night, setting up her music stand near the base of the stairs that adjoined what she did not know had been Forry's office. Sometimes she would depart the room momentarily to get something to drink or make a phone call or go to the bathroom, and when she returned to her music stand, she found the music pages scattered across the floor. She made a point of saying that it was not as if they had merely fallen down, and in any event, there was nothing to cause them to fall. It was as if someone had picked them up and thrown them.

A tenant in the former Ackermansion explains the way music papers kept scattering without any apparent reason.

With a little laugh, she commented: “I guess Victor just doesn’t like my singing.”

It was clear that there were no sources of drafts or anything that could easily explain the scattered music pages.

It really caught my attention, because I knew, of course, that this was a precise parallel to what had happened to Dr. Allison in his home in New Jersey the morning he had picked me up at the airport. The dozen or so printed pages he had tucked under his briefcase on the chair in the dining room had been scattered when he returned to the room, as though someone had picked them up and tossed them.

Skeptics detest any implications of “agenticity” in unexplained situations like this. Agenticity is a neologism – a word coined by author Dr. Michael Shermer (Executive Director of the Skeptics Society and Publisher of *Skeptic* magazine) to describe “the tendency to infuse patterns with meaning, intention and agency.” My entire theory and approach to the anomalies I have experienced, and the argument put forward throughout this book, is that when you detect patterns in seemingly unconnected events, those patterns very possibly do have meaning, do reveal intention and are the result of some source of agenticity (for example, the spirit of Forry acting with intent in an “agent

capacity.") In other words, the events are not really unconnected, even though we cannot see any obvious force or intelligence or planning agency to explain that connection.

In spite of the fact that skeptics would surely claim that it is jumping to unjustified conclusions to assume any connection between the two events (papers inexplicably falling and scattering from Dr. Allison's chair and papers inexplicably falling and scattering from a music stand in the former Ackermansion), it seems to me that any reasonable detective work demands that we highlight the fact that the same unexplained event happened in those two places. And the fact that those places are three thousand miles apart may in this case have no relevance. One event happened in Forry's former home, and the other happened in connection with an investigation of an unexplained event (the ink obliteration) that appears to have a connection to him.

There were other stories that suggested hauntings in the former Ackermansion – the French doors that opened by themselves in the middle of the night, and the bat that once flew in through a window into a bedroom. Those make good stories, but for me, I don't need to go beyond the incidents with the scattered music pages and the incident of scattered pages in Dr. Allison's home to show strong circumstantial evidence of the same unseen player behind both mysteries.

Toward the end of this book, we will deal with our return to the Ackermansion at the kind invitation of the current owner, Mark Rollings. When he learned about me and *The Life After Death Project* documentary, he was eager to see if my associates could examine scientifically in detail the phenomena that was continuing to occur in the former Ackermansion.

Gary Schwartz and I put together a team of about a dozen people engaged in scientific research or mediumship research, and we spent four days and three nights in Forry's former home. We even held a séance there. However, that was in 2015, after the other phenomena described in this book had occurred, so we will address that part of the adventure toward the end of this book, with a personal account from Dr. Allison.

III. The FATE Magazine Incident

The next incident involving ink occurred in *Fate* magazine. *Fate* has been published since the 1940's. Its tag line is: True Reports of the Strange and Unknown. Usually it has been published in digest size (like *Reader's Digest*), and is rarely seen on newsstands, relying instead on a loyal subscriber base that

is devoted to the magazine. One of the recurring features is called “My Proof of Survival,” which consists of reports from readers of incidents in their lives that convince them of the existence of unseen spirits and life after death.

Phyllis Galde is the current owner and publisher of *Fate*. She decided to devote much of the September-October 2010 issue to the art of pulp magazine illustrator Frank R. Paul, who was one of the most exceptional early science fiction artists. She knew that Frank R. Paul’s work for *Amazing Stories* magazine had been the earliest influence on Forrest J Ackerman. In fact, Forry had always told the story about discovering *Amazing Stories* at a newsstand on Western Avenue in Los Angeles when he was nine years old. He said that if magazines could have talked, that one would have said “Take me home, little boy, you will love me.”

The cover Forry saw that day was by Frank R. Paul. Later in life, for one of his famous birthday parties, Forry had a reprint commisioned of that cover, in which Forry was inserted as the main character, a spaceman confronting a giant insect on another planet. In his incurable punster style, Forry had the reprint titled: *Amazing Forries*.

At a conference, I had told Phyllis Galde of my strange experience with the anomalous ink obliteration, and how and why I connected it in my mind to Forry. She had asked me to write an article for the Frank R. Paul *Fate* issue about it, and I was only too happy to oblige her.

When I received the printed magazine with my article, my first reaction upon reading it was irritation and anger. There was an embarrassing and massive typographical mistake a few paragraphs into the article. It happened in the middle of a sentence about L. J. Dopp.

As I noted earlier, L. J. was the artist who painted what has become known as the “Blue Forry” painting that appears as the cover of the DVD of *The Life After Death Project*. It has a clock with the hands at two minutes to midnight. I have already pointed out that the painting was made in 2004, four years before Forry died, and the painting coincidentally shows the clock to be at the exact time Forry passed away on the night of December 4, 2008.

Paul is holding Forry's reprint of his favorite magazine, where Forry changed the title from Amazing Stories *to* Amazing Forries.

In *Fate* magazine, right in the middle of L.J. Dopp's name, there is an erroneous insertion of these words that I never wrote there, printed TWICE: **the blackout (in 2 levels of opacity) of 4 words in my document. Blacked out words are "spoke to Joe Amodei"the blackout (in 2 levels of opacity) of 4 words in my document. Blacked out words are 'spoke to Joe Amodei."**

It seemed to me to be such a stupid, foolish error. It destroyed the continuity of my story.

When I spoke both to Phyllis and her managing editor, David Godwin, they were shocked when they saw the mistake, and they told me my story had gone through four people before going to print, and no one had seen this. In addition to Phyllis and David, two proofreaders had gone over it. They felt sure it could not have been submitted to the printer that way. Obviously it was not done intentionally as a joke. This error showed up in all of the ten to fifteen thousand copies that had been printed, and it was an embarrassment to Phyllis, too.

When I calmed down, it entered my mind for the first time that perhaps this was no accident. If in fact the spirit of Forry had been responsible for the ink obliteration, which created emphasis by having two levels of blackout (i.e., two levels of opacity), then perhaps there was something deliberate about this apparent typographical mistake. For right in the middle of the name of the man whose painting had predicted the exact minute of Forry Ackerman's death, all readers of that issue of Fate are alerted twice to the inkblot in which Forry declared (in my interpretation of the intended message) that he spoke to Joe Moe after the tribute.

The Strange Case of
Forrest J Ackerman

by Paul Davids

Forrest J Ackerman was best known as the original editor of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, a magazine that burst onto the scene in 1958 and rallied a generation of adolescent boys to appreciate movie monsters of all breeds, from vampires to mummies, from werewolves to giant apes like King Kong. He was a major collector of Frank R. Paul paintings, and he was one of Paul's greatest admirers. He collected so much fantasy and science-fiction memorabilia (including the issues of *Amazing Stories* for which Paul painted so many covers), that Forry Ackerman (or FJA, as he was known to his legion of fans) housed it in all of the 18 rooms of his Los Angeles house that he called the Ackermansion. People came from all over the world to visit him and study the collection.

Last Photo of Ackerman and Davids before Ackerman passed. Taken Halloween 2008.
all photos ©2010 Paul Davids

Clock Predicts Time of Death

Forry Ackerman passed away December 4, 2008 at two minutes to midnight at the age of 92. A painting of Forry that I own, created by an artist named L. the blackout (in 2 levels of opacity) of 4 words in my document. Blacked out words are "Spoke to Joe Amodei"the blackout (in 2 levels of opacity) of 4 words in my document. Blacked out words are "Spoke to Joe Amodei" and painted about four years before Forry's death, shows the clock behind him at two minutes before the witching hour, predicting the exact moment of his passing.

However, despite his love of science fiction, FJA was also a skeptic to the end. In fact, he described himself as an atheist. He promoted tales of zombies and the undead, usually with hysterically funny photo captions, but he did not believe in life after death.

The page with what seemed to be a "stupid mistake" in Fate *magazine. But was it a mistake? Or was it another deliberate intervention and manipulation by Forry to capture our attention again in a dramatic and very specific way?*

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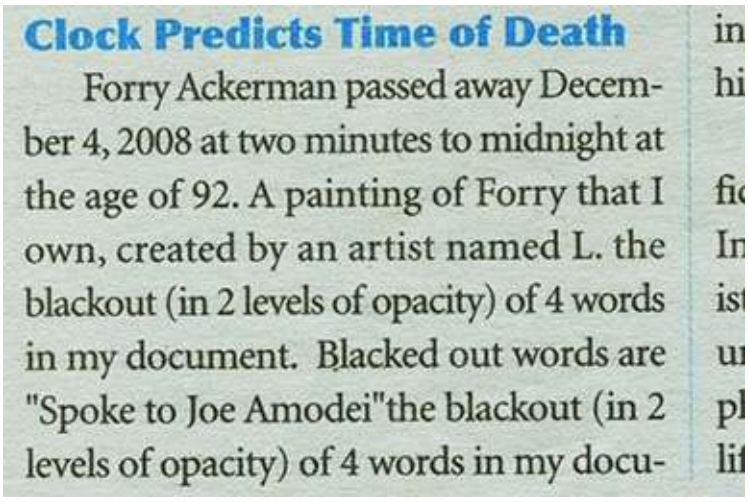
However, despite his love of science fiction, FJA was also a skeptic to the end. In fact, he described himself as an atheist. He promoted tales of zombies and the undead, usually with hysterically funny photo captions, but he did not believe in life after death.

Here you can see the entirety of the "error" in Fate *magazine. What a strange and seemingly targeted, deliberate misprint it is.*



Clock Predicts Time of Death

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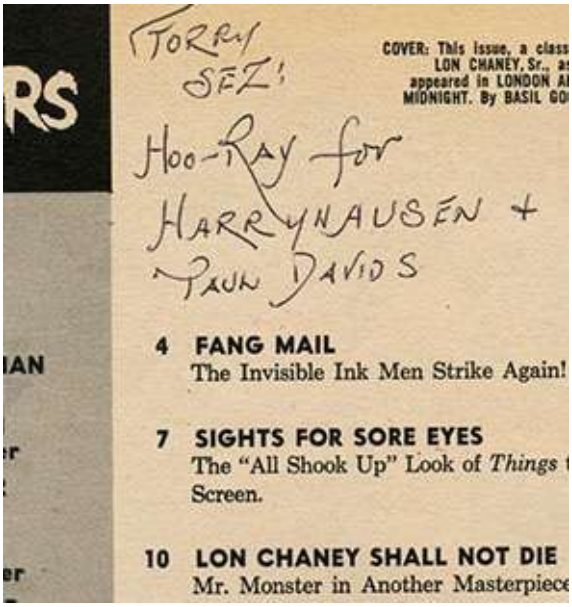
A close view of the specific "mistake." Notice the double-reference to the inkblot obliteration, coming right after "L" of L. J. Dopp's name.

For arch-skeptics and debunkers, this will be "mere" coincidence. For others, this will appear to be another message that shows up because, as one of his post-mortem adventures, Forry put it there, because he wanted it there.

I gave a lecture about this at a conference about the paranormal in Angel Fire, New Mexico. When I got to the point of explaining about Forry's love of puns and names within words, I showed an image of the table of contents page of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* #20, where Forry had signed "HOO-RAY FOR HARRYHAUSEN & PAUL DAVIDS." A friend in the audience, Jillian Burgin, asked me afterwards why I hadn't mentioned "The Invisible Ink Men Strike Again."

I had no idea what she was talking about.

She pointed out that Forry signed his name and the Harryhausen reference and then my name right above an entry in the Table of Contents called "FANG MAIL," consisting of letters from readers. Right below FANG MAIL it said: "The Invisible Ink Men Strike Again."



Until Paul gave that lecture, he had not noticed that Forry's autograph for him was written in the Famous Monsters *magazine directly above the phrase "The Invisible Ink Men Strike Again!"*

As a synchronicity, again, this was sensational. Of course, the ink obliteration of my document was not invisible ink, but one could interpret it to mean that the Ink Man who did it was invisible. The reference to both ink and invisibility and someone striking again, taken all together, called to mind my unsolved mystery. However, Forry had signed this at least a couple years before he passed away.

My emphasis on the importance of this remarkable "coincidence" later brought a rebuke from *Skeptic* magazine publisher Michael Shermer. He charged that, by my assigning meaning to an incident like that, or even the fact that the L. J. Dopp painting showed the time of Forry's death and was painted four years before he died, I was being illogical. Michael Shermer asserted that for those incidents to have somehow been connected, in advance, to events that happened years later, would imply that Forry Ackerman was a time-traveling superman.

I had a third synchronicity with a similar logical inconsistency that seemed to require time travel. I discovered that, when Forry sent me a special delivery letter in 1965 telling me that I was one of the teenage winners in the *Famous Monsters of Filmland* amateur film contest, he selected specific stamps for the envelope that seemed to have specific meaning in connection with what happened in the year 2009. The stamps were of Edgar Allan Poe and the Palace of the Governors of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Thus, his very envelope connected

me with Edgar Allan Poe and Santa Fe. (I had never been west of Virginia at that point in my life as a young teenager, when he sent me that envelope.) We had an electronic voice phenomenon involving Edgar Allan Poe (the word “Lenore”) that was clearly recorded on videotape in the Santa Fe house where the inkblot incident occurred, the very day after the ink obliteration appeared.

Dr. Shermer asked: How could any of these events that occurred years before the inkblot incident in Santa Fe have been predictors of the future without time travel involved? Surely, in his view, these were curious but ultimately totally meaningless coincidences, enhanced by the importance given to them in the mind of the beholder – me!

He asked me how I would explain it, and though I felt it was going out on a limb to make any attempt, I tried, thus offering him a hint at what has become one of my suspicions about the fabric of our mysterious universe. I wrote to him: Those kinds of synchronicities seem to me to resemble echoes in a canyon or ripples in a pond rather than direct communication or direct cause-and-effect. They may be a characteristic of the larger unseen reality of the universe rather than things done by the actual, premeditated calculation of the spirit of any one particular man. I can imagine a universe where ripples or echoes of an event go not only forward in time (i.e., events have real cause and effect repercussions) but ripples and echoes of events may also go backwards in time.

The letter Forry sent Paul Davids in 1965 had stamps of Edgar Allan Poe and Santa Fe. The significance converged 44 years later in 2009. The ink obliteration occurred in Santa Fe, followed a day later by an electronic voice phenomenon (EVP) of “Lenore,” an important name in two Poe poems (including The Raven).

By that supposition, some events that seem to be predictors of things that

will come to pass may not be either coincidences or prophetic stand-alone incidents, but may resemble backward ripples or echoes from something that happens at some future time. Scientific theory now favors the notion of “spooky action from a distance,” i.e., an inter-relationship between individual particles that are separated in space with no obvious way the particles could be influencing one another. In the Ackerman oddities, perhaps the autograph he wrote right above “The Invisible Ink Men Strike Again” could reflect a sort of “backward echo” or “backward emanation” from a future event that eventually took on importance, rather than it having been done by any conscious choice or awareness by Mr. Ackerman…or any time travel.

Or was it “mere” coincidence? And how many “mere” coincidences can occur before we reject the notion that they really are just happenstance? How many must occur before we take them as evidence of unseen agenticity or connections or deliberate, premeditated intention operating without our comprehension within our physical universe?

7. SEAN ASKS FOR A SIGN

I. Sean and Paul

Many of the odd incidents connected with the apparent postmortem adventures of Forry Ackerman came with my newly begun friendship with Sean Fernald. I knew little about Sean when I met him at one of Forry's annual birthday bashes, as we called them. Forry would always invite about a hundred friends to join him on or around November 24th. The first one I ever attended, I believe, was Forry's 65th birthday, held in Century City in Los Angeles. Later, these affairs were held at places as diverse as a Chinese restaurant in Glendale, the Friars Club and a large Thai restaurant on Hollywood Boulevard.

Sean and I had been regular guests, and Sean and I had been introduced several times but we hadn't really connected until the birthday bash of 2007. That was when Joe Moe informed me he had written a screenplay for a horror film called *Red Velvet*, which Sean was producing. I soon learned that Joe and Sean had grown up together as the closest of friends in Hawaii. Sean also explained that, in addition to producing, his "day job" was as an independent music supervisor for films. In that capacity, he hired composers and/or arranged for music licensing of appropriate pieces on a never-ending stream of film and television projects.

When *The Life After Death Project* was about mid-way through the several year process of being edited, I invited Joe Moe to join me for about ten days in Santa Fe to assist in editing. There were many hours of material to go through, and organizing it was an extremely complex process. Eventually, much of the material not used for the film became central to the sequel, *The Life After Death Project 2 – Personal Encounters*.

That week, Joe suggested I get in touch with Sean, who lived in Los Angeles, to be my music supervisor. Sean was very excited about the project, though he is what most people would consider a very levelheaded, practical and logical man, who was not predisposed to belief in anything paranormal. His

views were close to those that Forry had held while alive, and he announced his skepticism to me before we began. I let him know that it made no difference to me that he was a skeptic, that belief in life after death was certainly not a prerequisite for working with me on a film that was examining the question. I pointed out that, besides, if the premise was in fact correct, and if the spirit of Forry was influencing things in my life and the film, then Forry would take care of informing Sean what was really going on the same way he had with me.

Our work together began at the house in Big Bear Lake, where, in a split-level rustic cabin in serenity and solitude at the edge of a great forest, I had undertaken much of the work after pulling the editing equipment from Santa Fe. The equipment, consisting of a computer and over a dozen hard drives, was being transported frequently in those days back and forth between Big Bear (where Forry's postmortem adventures continued in full bloom) and our home in Los Angeles.

II. Sean, Joe Moe and Silke

One of the facts of Sean's life that I learned quickly was that Joe Moe was responsible for Sean meeting Silke, the beautiful German lady Sean married. It happened more or less like this: Silke was working as a stewardess for Lufthansa Airlines and was attending a party where Joe was in attendance, during one of Silke's stop-overs in Los Angeles in 2003. Joe had a hunch that his friend Sean would really like Silke, and that it was urgent that they meet, because she would be flying out soon. He called Sean and found Sean in a fatigued and somewhat cranky state of mind, and Sean said he just was not in the mood to get properly dressed and then drive to a party. There was something insistent about Joe Moe's tone, however, which finally convinced Sean to acquiesce.

Sean and Silke hit it off immediately, and they got married in 2004 in Bel-Air, California, at the Hannah Carter Japanese Garden. They now have two young children. When I hired Sean to work on the film, I did not know about any of that.

Like Joe Moe, Sean had been a very longtime friend of Forry Ackerman, and he had various collectibles connected with Forry that he had acquired through the years.

III. Sean, Music and Michael MacDonald

Sean and I began our first week of work together going through the film, identifying sections that needed music, and searching for the most appropriate clips from the rather enormous library of original music cues created by his friend and associate, Herman Beeftink.

The first thing out of the ordinary that happened was that, while Sean was online alongside me, trying to find a public domain performance of a Beethoven Symphony that was needed to accompany part of Whitley Strieber's interview, he received an email saying he had a Facebook message from Michael MacDonald. You know by now, of course, that Michael MacDonald of Halifax, Canada, is the documentary filmmaker who rapped on Forry's crypt and received "Ackerman000" on his computer in response.

The news of a message from Michael MacDonald to Sean Fernald was exceptionally weird, first because the two men did not know one another and had never been in touch. I had not been in contact with Michael for probably well over a year at that point, and so I certainly had not told Michael that Sean was working on *The Life After Death Project* with me. Sean knew of Michael MacDonald, because he had seen Michael's documentary about Forry and had attended the tribute for Forry in March of 2009. However, the two men had never been in touch. Both men had Facebook accounts but had never crossed paths on Facebook. They were not Facebook friends.

Sean's surprise at receiving notice of a message from Michael MacDonald was compounded by the fact that there actually was no message from Michael MacDonald. When I contacted Michael to get to the bottom of it, Michael insisted he had not sent Sean a message and did not know Sean. So how is it possible that Facebook sent the message to Sean saying Michael MacDonald had contacted him?

If you allow for the possibility of electronic, computerized intervention by the spirit of Forry once again, it makes sense as another of Forry's postmortem pranks, connecting Sean with the Canadian who had rapped on his crypt and received the "Ackerman000" CAPTCHA code message. It also seemed significant to me that this happened while I was a witness to it, while we were together working on the film about the Forry afterlife contacts.

IV. In the Mood for Some Wine?

Sean laughed and thought it was strange, amusing and highly coincidental, but his skepticism was not shattered by one incident alone. The big shock came when my wife joined us at Big Bear Lake for the weekend, after Sean and I had

been at work together throughout the week. Hollace brought with her a bottle of wine for us to enjoy together. She did not go out to buy the wine, she took it from one of the bottles in storage at our home.

Hollace and I do not drink. I think that “almost never” is a good description of the frequency of our imbibing alcohol, even though we have attended probably hundreds of Hollywood parties. Hollace’s job for over three decades has been to manage Hollywood premieres, first at Columbia Pictures, then at Sony/TriStar, and for about the last 20 years, for Universal Pictures. The fact that we both have been to so many star-studded Hollywood events and almost never saunter up to the bar speaks volumes about our lack of interest in alcohol.

The bottles of wine we have been gifted through the years have piled up, seldom used, unless we throw a party ourselves. A friend from France visited us a couple years ago and was astonished at the collection of wine which we keep in cabinets and was of little or no interest to us.

She added up the value of these bottles and told us the wine collection was worth many thousands. We are not wine people and didn’t really know the difference between those valuable bottles which were presents to us, and the bottles of much cheaper wine that were in the same cabinet (most of which were also presents, from less flamboyant or less wealthy friends).

That weekend, before coming to Big Bear Lake, Hollace haphazardly, with no thought whatsoever as to making a selection, just grabbed one bottle at random to take. In fact, the bottle was not even originally intended to be brought to Big Bear. Hollace had stopped off to see a friend from Santa Fe (Elizabeth Baker) who was in Los Angeles to visit her baby grandchild. When Hollace went in to see the baby, she forgot the bottle of wine (that she had intended to leave as a gift) in her car. When she saw that they already had wine they were serving, she decided not to retrieve the bottle and to bring it up to Big Bear Lake instead.

When she arrived in Big Bear somewhat late at night and discovered that Sean and I were still working, she suggested we break for a glass of wine, and she presented the bottle.

Sean literally went into shock when he saw it.

I wish I had a photo of his face at that instant. It was an immediate, visceral reaction. You rarely see a friend so overcome with unexplained emotion, losing his composure instantly and entering a stupefied state of being fully flabbergasted.

It was a somewhat rare vintage of Spanish wine called Las Rocas de Alejandro from 2004. In fact, it was the precise type of wine Sean had selected to serve at his wedding to Silke, which as I mentioned was in 2004. It was the

only wine at the wedding. And there were fewer than ten guests at the wedding, and among the guests were Joe Moe and Forrest J Ackerman. Forry's attendance was a testament to his bond with both Sean and Joe.

Here we are faced with a synchronicity of momentous proportions. The date of the wine matched the year of the wedding. Regardless of how it came to pass that Hollace picked up that particular wine from the fifty or more bottles on hand, once Sean explained the significance of the wine, the incident felt as if it were another personal message from Forry, reminding Sean of their connection and that important day that he, Sean and Joe Moe had all been together for the joyous occasion.

Silke (left), Forrest J Ackerman and Sean Fernald at the Fernalds' wedding in 2004.

The Spanish red wine (Las Rocas de San Alejandro) photographed at Sean and Silke's 2004 wedding attended by both Forry and his best pal and caretaker Joe Moe. This is the same red wine (a bottle of 2004 vintage) that Hollace brought to Big Bear Lake where Paul and Sean were working on The Life After Death Project. *Only Sean knew of the connection of the wine to his wedding that Forry attended.*

Psychiatrist/author Carl Jung argued that the polarities of thinking and feeling, intuition and sensation, are what define life for all human beings, regardless of their psychological or sociological background. Does the fact that we intuitively felt, with the greatest excitement and conviction, that there was deep meaning in the synchronicity of the wine prove that there really was? Does it prove that some unseen force within nature or the natural order of the universe caused it to happen?

In the Western world, our culture teaches us to perceive reality in terms of causes and effects. In the brilliant 1938 book by F. David Peat called *Synchronicity, The Bridge Between Matter and Mind*, the author points out that physicist Wolfgang Pauli (creator of the Pauli Exclusion Principle in physics) joined forces with Dr. Jung to define synchronicities as acausal.

Sean holds the bottle of wine that Hollace brought to Big Bear Lake. The label (see below) clearly shows it's the same brand as his wedding wine, and the year of this wine is the year of Sean and Silke's wedding.

A closeup of the label on the bottle of wine in Big Bear Lake.

He states that Jung and Pauli, who were collaborators in some writings as well as doctor and patient, defined synchronicities as "acausal, meaningful, unique events and involving some form of pattern."

Author Peat states that in order to accept that some unique and meaningful events do not have specific causes that we can determine (i.e., they are considered acausal), we must accept that our current worldview is limited by "its notions of causality, the arrow of time, objectivity, the separation of mind and matter, and the emphasis upon reproducibility rather than on unique, single

events."

He points out that Newtonian causality, the backbone of Western thought and science, has successfully been used to predict eclipses, planetary movements, the trajectories of space rockets and rising tides, and it is most successful when describing mechanistic systems. Peat points out, as did Jung and Pauli, that "there are a host of other phenomena in the natural world which call for a totally different approach. In discovering the basis for synchronicity, an alternative path from that of causality, mechanistic systems and determination needs to be followed."

As I have pointed out many times in this book, we all know that synchronicities happen, and people all over the world debate their meaning and significance. We don't know why they happen. For the arch-skeptic it is random, meaningless chance. Also, for the arch-skeptic, synchronicities are, as F. David Peat states, "the jokers in the deck of life." And finally, for the arch-skeptic, it is accepted that if a million monkeys type randomly at a million typewriters for a million years, one of them will type a perfect draft of Shakespeare's *King Lear* by total accident. However, none of the synchronicities described in this book took a million years or a million monkeys. And they all leave me spellbound.

It would not be an acausal explanation to suggest that the ghost of Forrest J Ackerman, with deliberation, determination to make a point, and with both design and agenticity, silently intervened to direct Hollace's arm and hand to the very bottle of wine he wanted her to select. Or that once again, with the bottle in the car when she arrived at the Los Angeles party for which she had brought it, she decided to leave it in the car because this same "ghost" silently influenced her, knowing that if it stayed in the car, it would soon end up in Big Bear and be presented to Sean Fernald.

Primitive or superstitious as that causal explanation might be, it has an intuitive splendor to it, especially when set side by side with all the other synchronicities and unexplained physical incidents in this book. In the end, that may prove to be a simplistic way of thinking about all of this, like saying we have thunderbolts because Zeus hurls them down from Mount Olympus.

The actual forces at work may be so subtle yet complex, and may suggest patterns in the universe that connect mind and matter, that are somehow unified and astonishingly interconnected, that we cannot yet understand. I proceed with the feeling that I am in contact with a literal ghost (or to some, a poltergeist) that has powers of deliberate intervention in the physical world. That does not mean I am not open to the possible eventual discovery, by scientific means, of vast and complex forces weaving through existence – forces that would explain all of this

– that I cannot possibly currently comprehend.

My friend, the director Paul Williams (*Dealing*, *The Revolutionary*, *Nunzio*) was an arch-skeptic who had always described himself as an agnostic, until an incident occurred right after his mother's death, in which he took a photo showing the hospice workers at his mother's corpse and an anomalous image of something resembling a spirit directly above his mother. When that occurred, Paul said he went from calling himself an agnostic to calling himself an ignoramus. He thought ignoramus was a proper term for his conversion because he went from a person who believed nothing to being a person who decided he knew absolutely nothing. He could not explain that photo and it shook up his entire life.

I had been making the transition from agnostic to ignoramus ever since the eve of the inkblot. Hopefully, Sean Fernald would not think harshly of me if I were to declare that the wine incident (coupled with the inexplicable Facebook contact that very day from Mike MacDonald in Halifax) began his transition from agnostic to ignoramus, too.

After Hollace departed at the end of the weekend, Sean and I remained at Big Bear Lake, working side by side. Sean did not tell me this until later, but he playfully said to the spirit of Forry: "If you really are still out there and still in contact with us and you can manipulate things here, then please give me a sign. You like creepy, crawly things. I haven't been bitten by a spider in ten years, so if you're really here, have a spider bite me."

The first relevant thing that happened after that was that Sean noticed a very big daddy longlegs in a sink in a bathroom at Big Bear Lake. He didn't mention it to anyone. He checked back later, and he certainly thought it was curious that the daddy longlegs had stayed in the same place for hours without stirring at all.

Many people think that daddy longlegs are not literally spiders, because they are commonly classified as a type of insect called opilionids arachnids, which don't produce silk or have venom as spiders do. However, actually the term "daddy longlegs" also refers to pholcids, which have long legs and small bodies (and resemble opilionids) but are true spiders.

Things were growing curiouser by the presence of this insect, which could well have been a pholcid "daddy longlegs," thus possibly relating to Sean's request to Forry for a spider bite.

Sean told me later that he is a "catch and release guy," meaning that he does not kill spiders. He captures the spider and puts it outside. He did that with the daddy longlegs. He woke up the next morning with no spider bite, which

reinforced his natural skepticism.

However, a day or so later he began scratching his arm and observed that he had two spider bites. At that point, he called me up and told me the whole story of his plea to Forry to send him a sign. He had chosen a spider bite as the requested sign because he thought it was highly unlikely it would happen by chance.

Sean became open-minded as a result of these incidents. He decided for the first time that it was possible that the phenomena I was experiencing perhaps could be evidence of exactly what I claimed they were.

Although not mentioned in *The Life After Death Project* documentary, the night before I boarded a plane to see Dr. Gary Schwartz to get a reading from Israeli psychic Orit Ish-Yemini Tomer, I got two severe spider bites on my hip. They itched ferociously and I scampered to find some ointment to ease the discomfort. Like Sean, I had not had a spider bite in as long as I could remember.

Then, upon my arrival in Tucson, Gary Schwartz got a spider bite – not something that ever happens to him, either.

It was much later, in re-examining Forrest J Ackerman's short story, "A Letter to an Angel," about the hunchbacked boy, that I made a discovery. I realized that in his fiction, Forry had given thought to the concept of spiders having unique significance. His story, which I discussed in a previous chapter, included the concept that a spider could serve as a messenger or even harbor the very soul of a human being. He even specifically refers to a daddy longlegs.

In the story, Forry describes the items in the room of Timmy, the hunchbacked boy who is his main character. The items included a pasted scrapbook of Lon Chaney pictures, plus various toys and a kite. Then he states: "A big daddy longlegs, his nocturnal affairs disturbed by this unusual activity in his domain and sensing danger, hastily began to descend from the web he had industriously spun over the kite. Don't step on it – it may be Lon Chaney! Yes, Timmy was convinced that a man who could make his legs disappear, who could grow a hump on his back and take it off again (that was a trick Timmy hoped to accomplish when he grew up), who could look like he was blind, who could throw real sharp knives with his toes and hit the bull's eye, who could slide down a tightrope on his head – who was to deny that such a god-like man might not also make himself look like a gorilla or a scarecrow… or even a spider?"

Sean Fernald was unaware that Forry, over a half century previously, had written these specific contemplations. Sean had no thought of that when staring at the daddy longlegs in the sink, which remained there unmoving for a very

long time. However, once incidents like this occur, and once one finds parallels in Forry's own existence and consciousness, things like that have a way of taking on the significance of meaningful symbols. Thus, when I would see a spider in an unusual place at an unusual time, I would naturally find myself musing about whether Forry had sent it.

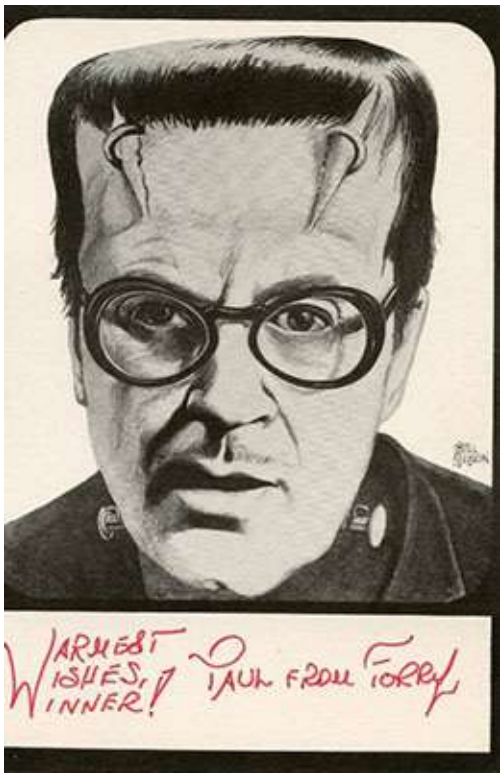
One day, I interviewed Ben Hammond for *The Life After Death Project*. He came over to my Los Angeles home and sat in the living room for the interview. Ben was one of the lead players in SyFy Channel's *Fact or Faked* TV series. During the interview, I noticed that a spider crawled along the top of the couch where Ben was seated and stopped near his shoulder and did not move. I captured it in a glass, took it outside and quickly released it.

V. Fang Mail From The Past

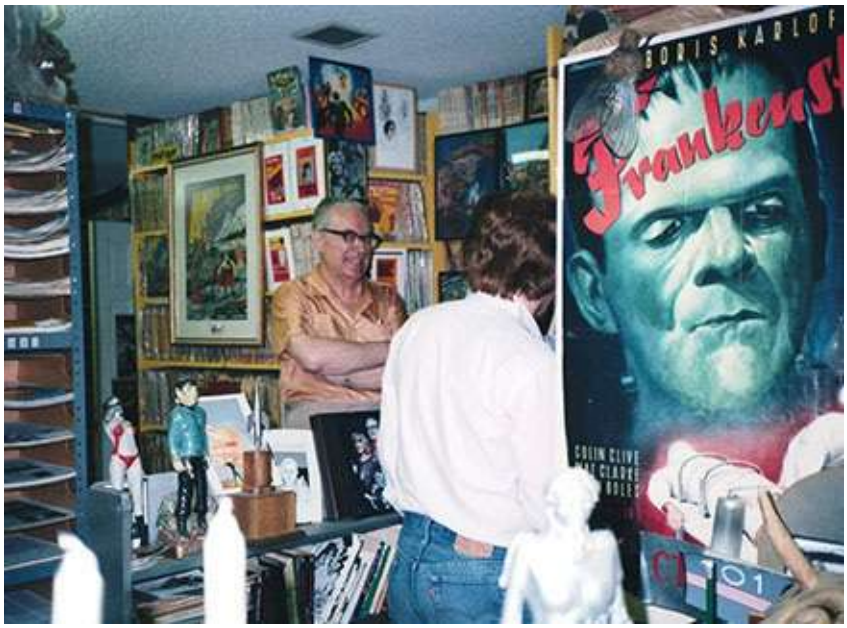
Another odd Forry event involving Sean occurred June 4th or 5th of 2013. I had just received the manufactured DVD's of *The Life After Death Project*, and Sean Fernald wanted to come over and pick up a copy. Before he came, he started looking for something in a file cabinet, unrelated to me or this project. In fact, he was looking for something Forry had written about the origins of the comic character Vampirella, which Forry had created at the request of his publisher James Warren. Sean needed this for an article he was working on for the resurrected publication of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*.

In the file he was searching, he stumbled across something that should not have been there – it was a postcard. The postcard had a drawing by artist Bill Nelson that showed Forry Ackerman as Frankenstein. The postcard was a couple decades old, Sean says, and Forry had personally signed it in red ink. It was signed "WARMEST WISHES, WINNER! PAUL FROM FORRY"

Sean did not know why it was signed to Paul and never given to Paul – or who was the Paul for whom it was intended. Sean did not know why he had it in his possession or what "winner" meant in this context.



The card that Sean inexplicably found in a file in his home just before coming to Paul Davids' house. Forry had signed it to Paul. Which Paul? It had not been delivered. Sean delivered it to Paul Davids, assuming that was Forry's posthumous wish.



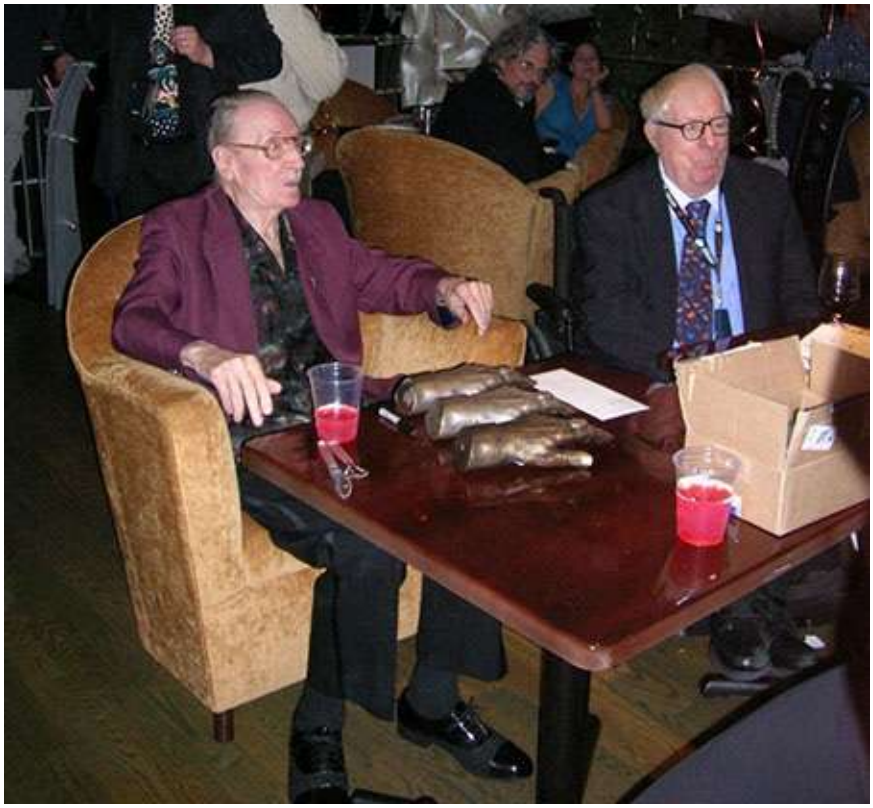
Forry in the Ackermansion with his treasured Frankenstein *poster nearby*.

He speculated that at one time there must have been a contest (probably connected with *Famous Monsters* magazine), and that Forry had signed a number of such postcards and given them out to a number of the winners, but that he never got around to giving this one to "winner Paul." Sean didn't know how it ended up in his Vampirella file or why it was in his possession, except that he had a lot of Forry Ackerman's memorabilia and this was just another item.

However, was it "just another item?" This was the only postcard like this Sean had. His skepticism had vanished to the point that he decided it was probably in his custody because Forry wanted him to give it to me.

Sean brought the postcard over to me that day, in coming to get his DVD of *The Life After Death Project*, and he immediately told me that, although he had been a skeptic for a long time, he couldn't be skeptical about this anymore. The fact that it's signed "WARMEST WISHES, WINNER" is also interesting because, as you well know, some of my first connections with Forry were when I was a winner in a film contest run by his magazine, *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. And I was a recipient of Forry's Helping Hand Award.

The quality of the synchronicities in the strange case of the postmortem adventures of Forrest J Ackerman was astonishing, and they were increasing in number all the time.



Forry and author Ray Bradbury preparing to give out Forry's Helping Hand Awards at one of Forry's birthday parties.

8. JACK AND THE MIR-ACK-ULOUS

One of the readers of *Fate* who got in touch with me after my article was published was an acquaintance of Forry Ackerman named Jack Kelleher. Jack had not known Forry intimately, but he did have the good fortune to interview Forry, and Jack later purchased an item from Forry, a bowtie that had belonged to *Dracula* actor Bela Lugosi that purportedly had drops of Lugosi's blood. Jack also had managed to obtain Forry's autograph on a copy of a book about Forry called *Famous Monster of Filmland*. Forry's autograph on the book was signed on three lines like this:

JACK KELLEHER
GRATEFULLY
FORRY ACKERMAN

Jack was very startled after he read my *Fate* article, because he knew that his Forry autograph was also evidence of an ink anomaly. He had observed that, with the passage of time, the ink in his own name and the ink in "Ackerman" had faded considerably, but the ink in "Jack," "Gratefully" and "Forry" had not. It was all ink from the same pen and all had been written in the same minute or two that it took Forry to write it. Why would only his own last name and the last name "Ackerman" fade, while the rest of it did not? It was another ink mystery.

I asked Jack Kelleher to put his experiences into his own words, because, just like me, a whole series of events haunted him for a certain period of time after Forry's passing. He mentions Forry's love of masks and specific incidents that happened to me involving a mask from Zimbabwe. I will get to my description of those incidents after you read what Jack wrote. Here is his version of events, which he has liberally embellished with puns in the spirit of the writing style of Forrest J Ackerman:

JACK AND THE MIR-ACK-ULOUS

by Jack Kelleher

You cannot see the invisible. Yet if you see its effects you know it must be there.

– from *A Course in Miracles*

I. Dr. Acula's Bowtie

At age 11, by an unlucky accident, I missed out on a chance to meet Forry during Forry's 1963 cross-country trip, during which Forry visited fans of *Famous Monsters* in their homes. Years later, when I sent Forry a letter describing the disappointment I had felt as a child at missing out on the chance to meet him, Forry telephoned me with the news that he had made me an honorary member of Forry's Bat Pack, which consisted of Forry and his two friends named Ray – Ray Bradbury and Ray Harryhausen. Over the ensuing years until Forry's death in 2008, I corresponded off and on with Forry and taped two phone interviews him – material that later saw publication in the Forry-inspired magazine, *Monster Memories*

The mystery train of Forry-related coincidences began making stops at my station even before his death.

In October of 2000, I watched an AMC MONSTERFEST Halloween marathon that featured a tour of the Ackermansion. Prominently displayed was a bowtie worn by Bela Lugosi in his role as Dracula (sporting a drop of Bela's blood from a shaving cut!)

It was mounted on a stunning, lifelike Lugosi display mask-- and of all the wonderful treasures I had just seen, I positively "drooled blood" over it: "That's the one I would most like to own! But of course, THAT could never happen." I was just happy I recorded Forry's entertaining tour so I could see it again one day.

Three years later, an auction catalog featuring the very item I had coveted arrived unexpectedly in my mailbox, and as it turned out I won the bowtie and mask combo by the skin of my wallet. During the auction, I had reached my spending limit, and I had barked a bitterly disappointed "NO!" at the phone rep who was placing my bids for me. But in the noise and excitement he thought he heard me yell "GO!"

He placed another bid, which turned out to be the winning one. I could have protested, but it was only a little more to pay, and I decided not to look a gift vampire in the fangs. And I made sure Forry knew how much I appreciated and

honored my new Best Fiend Forever.

I can barely believe this happened the way it did even as I write about it, but the proof sits regally displayed in my living room. And even though he was soon to leave his earthly body, FJA was just getting warmed up. As I wrote in my MONSTER MEMORIES article on this case, “Forry Ackerman was a magical guy in life, so it doesn’t surprise me too much that he may have turned into an even more magical guy in death.” Knowing how much he loved masks, and since hearing of Paul’s close encounters with masks behaving in “batty” ways, I’ve wondered at times if my “bloody bowtie” might have some tie-in with all of the Forry-related coincidences I’m about to share with you.

II. Do the Matheson

My Ack-venture with Paul Davids began when a friend visiting from out-of-state informed me of Paul’s *Fate* magazine feature about this impish entity who came to be known as “The Invisible Ink Man.” As a lifelong fan and acquaintance of Forry’s, I eagerly sought out the magazine. After reading Paul’s article, I went to my computer to email my friend about it and noticed that my screen saver was showing a photo of Forry’s autograph: “Beast Witches! Forrest J Ackerman” it greeted me.

The Bela Lugosi bowtie that Jack won in an auction – by mistake!

That was rather odd, because at the time only a couple of the hundreds of photos on my computer concerned Forry. This was my first "inkling" that something connected with Forry was going on. I remember thinking "What a coincidence!" and shrugging off the incident. I was soon to discover that "The Invisible Ink Man" was not one to be erased from my notice so readily.

It was during my reading of Paul's updated online article about the case that I first saw references to the moniker "The Invisible Ink Man" – a phrase that lingered in my awareness like soft background music as I left my computer. I settled into my favorite chair with the book I was reading at that time, Richard Matheson's *Collected Stories Volume One*, and flipped to the page where I had left off – the beginning of a story titled "Disappearing Act." I couldn't help noting the obvious coincidental tiein of this title with the *Fate* article I had just read, which mentioned Matheson and the fact that he had been interviewed for Paul's film about communicating with the dead.

Additionally, the story's title – "Disappearing Act" – was a concise description of what happened to those significant words on Paul's document that were made to disappear by a mysterious ink blob that cuttingedge chemical analysis couldn't explain. The title also contained part of Forry's name in the word ACT. Could this have been a sort of "Ack" of confession?

A week or two before I learned of Paul's *Fate* article from my visiting out-of-state friend, we had planned a night out to see a new movie he suggested might be of interest – a movie with the curiously fitting title of *Hereafter*.

As the day of his visit drew near, our plans changed. We decided to order a pizza, chat about old times, and watch some movies from my sizable collection. I emailed him a list of about 35 DVDs from all categories – drama, comedy, documentary, concerts, *etc.* – and he chose three that caught his interest.

Unlike me, my friend is not a dedicated horror/sci-fi fan. He's just a guy who enjoys a good movie and doesn't know or care about details such as who writes the screenplays. The three films he picked were *Trilogy of Terror*, *Duel* and *Pit and the Pendulum* – all of them scripted by Richard Matheson, a fact of which he was totally unaware.

Jack Kelleher, whose adventures began with a bowtie of Dracula (actor Bela Lugosi).

Matheson's *Disappearing Act*, Paul's *Fate* article which mentioned his friendship with Forry and his interest in life-after-death communication, a movie titled *Hereafter*, and my friend's random selection of three Matheson-penned films – all these coincidences began coalescing in my awareness shortly after I had read both versions of Paul's *Fate* article. (When I say "both versions," I'm referring to the fact that the online version was expanded to discuss the anomalous "misprint" that had appeared in the printed magazine.)

However, there were more coincidences – so many more, in fact, that I can only detail the most striking ones here. The one I'm about to describe seemed a bit trivial at first, but it is so rich in symbolism that I now feel obliged to include it.

****

When I was in the middle of emailing Paul about this odd flurry of Matheson coincidences, I received an Amazon.com email advertising Matheson's book, *Somewhere in Time* (original title: *Bid Time Return*), which I happened to have read recently. In that book, Matheson cites J. B. Priestley's *Man and Time*.

Intrigued, I had purchased a paperback copy of it. On page 244 there is a description of an apparent precognitive dream in which the dreamer, a medical photographer, is looking for a lost developing tank that is also missing in "real life."

In the dream, he finds a cupboard marked FJA39, in which he finds the

missing tank. After waking up, he remembers his dream, finds a key labelled FJA39, and he uses it to unlock in reality the very same cupboard that appeared in his dream. But upon opening the cupboard, he can't see the missing tank at first because it is hidden in plain view: its color exactly matches the interior of the cupboard. Consequently, he does not believe it's there, until he takes a much closer look and his vision readjusts.

Could Forry be trying to teach the skeptics among us something with this nifty little parable? (Forry fans will recognize the significance of the number 39 appearing after his initials: 1939 was a landmark year in FJA's life, during which he attended the first World Science Fiction Convention and pioneered the popular tradition of wearing costumes at such events.)

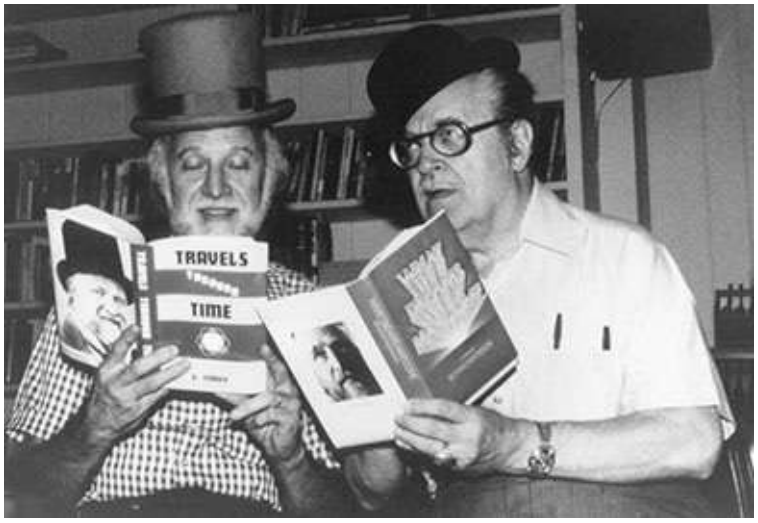
As if to emphasize the Forry connection, directly following the description of the FJA39 dream in *Man and Time* was an account of another precognitive dream involving one Stephen King-Hall, a "well-known writer." In our last phone conversation, Forry and I had talked at length about Stephen King (the horror writer) and how Forry loved the film based on King's serialized story, *The Green Mile*.

The symbolism of a photographer's developing tank will be made clear in the description of the next synchronicity.

****

I wondered why so many of the above coincidences were about Matheson. At that time, of course, he was still very much alive, but within two years would join his friend Forry in the hereafter.

But shortly "thereafter," *Famous Monsters* magazine published a rare photo of Forry with Matheson. This image beautifully tied all the coincidences together in a final one that was pregnant with meaning. In this photo, Forry is holding Matheson's novel, *What Dreams May Come* – about a recently deceased man who is desperately attempting to contact the living – and Matheson reads another of his books, with the very suggestive title, *Travels Through Time*.



Author Richard Matheson and Forry "clowning around" holding two Matheson books charged with significance, one involving time travel, the other about the afterlife.

Two friends, one deceased, one still alive but soon to join him in eternity, seem to signal in this "timeless" photo the amazing ability of synchronicity to confound the orderly march of linear time.

The extended thread of Matheson-themed coincidences has a touch of otherworldly eloquence that is difficult to discount as mere chance. Unlike his atheistic friend, Richard Matheson very much believed in the afterlife and wrote books on the subject. Could Forry, by weaving his revelatory "guest appearances" throughout, be trying to tell us that at least one atheist has "seen the light?"

III. Not Seeing is Believing

As if the aforementioned anomalies weren't strange enough, at the time all of them happened, the subject of my Facebook profile photo was The Invisible Man! As a joke, about a week before I knew anything about Invisible Ink Men or had begun reading a story titled "Disappearing Act," I had posted a photo of a sealed Invisible Man action figure card – with no figure inside the plastic bubble.

I thought this little chain of synchronicities interesting enough to write about, so I sat down with pen and paper to compose an article about it which was later published in *Monster Memories* magazine. I had only written a few words when my pen suddenly stopped writing.

I scribbled hard and then scribbled even harder, all to no effect. Annoyed, I started to get up to go find another pen, when suddenly the connection of “pen that won’t write” to “Invisible Ink” clicked into place. Could this be another synchronicity, another seeming “message?”

Picking up the same pen with an open-minded spirit, I tentatively began writing again, this time putting very slight pressure on the paper. To my surprise, the pen worked flawlessly – it didn’t write a few ghostly words and then go blank again, as a pen about to run out of ink will do – it continued to perform with boldness and clarity for several more weeks.

After I had finished typing my *Monster Memories* article and emailed it to editor Dennis Druktenis, I noticed yet another oddity, and this one was a whopper that still haunts me.

Below the last line I had created for that article was an exclamation point which had no business being there. I certainly did not put it there. In order to do so, I would have had to perform three separate actions: create a new line, then hold down the shift key with my right hand, while striking the exclamation point (which is way over at the other end of the keyboard) with my left hand. And there was no one else with me in the house – who I could see-at the time.

The odds that I could have done all that without being consciously aware of at least part of the sequence of actions must be astronomical.

And here is the last part of my *Monster Memories* article, in which that inexplicable exclamation mark seemed to have been typed by an invisible hand on an extra line at the end:

About a year before the *Fate* article was published, I picked up the *Famous Monster of Filmland* book Forry had signed for me (Forry was the Famous Monster), and I looked at his autograph. It had faded – not enough to spoil the autograph, but enough to notice.

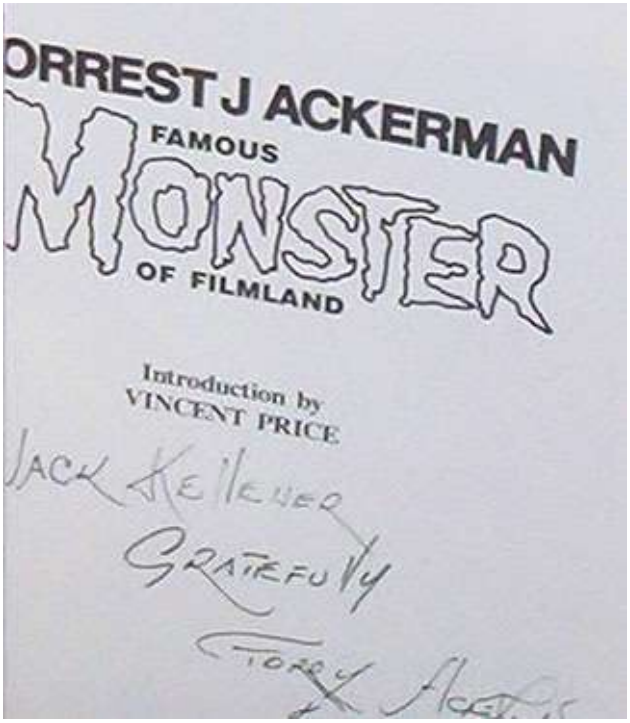
As I was finishing up this article, I recalled that faded autograph and with a mental chuckle thought, “I wonder if Forry signed that book with vanishing ink?” Perhaps – just perhaps – the Invisible Ink Man was chuckling right along with me.

!

The coda to this story is that in my *Monster Memories* article as it was published, my description of that Forry autograph as having been originally written in “big, bold black ink” had been morphed by a peculiarly appropriate typo to read “big, bold **blank** ink.”

BIG BOLD BLANK INK!

Another very significant typo appearing in print in a magazine article about Forrest J Ackerman.



The autograph Forry signed for Jack Kelleher, which with time was no longer in big, bold, black ink. Parts of it mysteriously faded.

After my article was published, the synchronicities shut off as though an invisible hand had flicked a switch, and I thought these fascinating "visitations" had run their course. Little did I suspect they were about to rise to a whole new level of strangeness.

I think Paul must be a kind of catalyst or lightning rod for these synchronicities, because shortly after making his acquaintance, I began to be inundated by the heavy-duty ones. These included emails that went where no emails have gone before, an eBay purchase with hidden Ackerman content, and apparent personal greetings received on my TV set. For awhile, Forry seemed to be everywhere I looked – quite a feat for an "invisible" man.

IV. Death is no Longer a Foregone (Forry-gone) Conclusion

Well, maybe these weren't exactly apparitions, so let's call them "Ack-

aritions," and here are some of the most notable ones. If you find them hard to believe, I can't blame you – I experienced them, and I'm still scratching my head…

Let's start with a relatively mild example. From time to time, I'm prone to post goofy humor on my Facebook page. On one occasion (April 11, 2012, during the last election year), I had found a photo of Moe Howard of The Three Stooges that was captioned in large letters, "Just Say Moe." So I posted it on my Wall along with the following text:

"MOE FOR PRESIDENT! We need a MOE nonsense leader who will take charge of the knuckleheads in Congress! Plus, he is a man of great fore(locks)sight, having adopted a BEATLE haircut when there was MOE such thing as a Beatle! Maybe it was called a MOE-haircut in those days? Nyuk, nyuk, nyuk."

At the time I wrote that, I was just "making a funny" – I had no idea the joke could be connected to the Forry case until Paul commented on my post and pointed out that "Moe" could refer to Joe Moe, Forry's loyal and trusted friend and caregiver, and the subject of the apparent clue highlighted in Paul's ink stain. It was only then that I realized how Forryesque the syntax of my caption was (very similar indeed to Forry's Famous Monsters caption-writing style) and recalled that, at the time I wrote it, I almost typed "Forry locks" instead of fore locks.

The thought of an invisible Forry leaning over my shoulder and whispering the words that would manifest as my Facebook post was both a little scary and oddly comforting – having Uncle Forry as your muse is not the worst fate that could befall a writer who is trying to be punny.

Jack Kelleher's Moe was from the Three Stooges (Curly, Larry and Moe).

V. Next Stop – The Gamma Zone

The theme of invisibility continued with the next synchronicity. I was doing research on *The Twilight Zone* (no connecion to the Forry case) and needed to find a copy of the first issue of the sci-fi magazine *Gamma*, from the year 1963. The only fact I knew about the mag was that a bibliography I had consulted indicated that this issue contained an interview with Rod Serling. I located a copy on eBay and bought it.

In the eBay listing there was an image of the mag's front cover, with a list of the contributing authors. When I received it, I was startled to see Forry's name at the top of the list among those authors. Strange – I hadn't noticed his name when I had perused the eBay photo of the same cover.

Even more strange – Forry's contribution was a short story titled "The Girl Who Wasn't There" – about an invisible girl earnestly attempting to re-establish contact with the living!

VI. The Medium is the Message

Paul graciously sent me an advance DVD of *The Life After Death Project*. By that time, I thought I was beyond being blown away by synchronicities. But

during my viewing of the DVD something happened that raised my amazement quotient to a whole new level.

Earlier, a skeptic friend (Barry) and I had debated the Forry case in a series of emails which were later posted to Facebook. Like many other skeptics, this friend tends to examine each one of the coincidences as a separate entity and dismiss it, without taking into account their collective pattern. While he is a highly competent systems analyst with a scientifically trained mind, and I respect his right to this viewpoint, I am frankly bewildered by the narrowness of vision it betrays. I felt he was limiting himself by majoring in minor details and should look at this case through a lens of wider focus. I retorted with the humorous metaphoric pun: "You can't see the Forrest for the trees." I deliberately spelled it with two r's, as in Forrest J Ackerman.

But my gentle "poke" backfired and Barry doubled down on the dogmatism. Our perspectives on the issue could not have been more polarized: what I saw as the "ink-credible" nature of the coincidences, he claimed he saw as – "nothing out of the ordinary."

The oddest part of all, to me, was that as I continued experiencing stranger and stranger coincidences, he began experiencing them with me, and the stranger they became, the more he dug in his heels and continued to deny their significance. We do see eye-to-eye on other paranormal topics. But whenever our conversation turns to the subject of synchronicity, it almost seems (to me, anyway) as though Barry puts on a blindfold, and he prefers to "view" the subject from that perspective.

Very soon after our debate, I received my advance copy of *The Life After Death Project* from Paul, and while viewing it, I needed to pause play to visit the bathroom. Before resuming the playback I thought, "If Forry really is contacting me, now would be a good time for him to prove it." So, I asked him to "send me a definite sign." Then I pressed play.

The film resumed at the point where a medium, who had been told only the first name of the person the sitter (Paul) wanted to contact, was beginning her session, describing what Forrest was telling her. I was just sitting down, but instead nearly missed the chair and fell down, when I heard her quote a characteristically playful Forry as saying: "You can't see the Forrest for the trees" – the identical pun I had used in the spirited debate with Barry. At that moment it seemed to me to be an immediate, definite and personalized response to my request.

VII. The Irony of *Iron Man 3*

Here we must revisit my skeptical friend, who is contrary by nature and enjoys playing devil's advocate in almost any situation, however trivial. He figures in several of the anomalies I experienced, almost as though he was as much benignly "targeted" as me.

One Saturday in May, 2013, we watched my DVD of *The Life After Death Project*, after which we went to see *Iron Man 3*, which had just opened at a local theater about a seven minute drive from my house. Toward the end of *The Life After Death Project*, Barry began insisting we were going to miss the beginning of *Iron Man 3* – we'd better cut the DVD short and leave for the theater right away. I thought we still had plenty of time, but realizing we could resume watching *The Life After Death Project* after we got back from the theater, I didn't press the point.

As it worked out, we were both right; we got to the Regal just as the trailers concluded and the house was going dark. However, then something very bizarre happened. The movie did not begin at the beginning – it began about four minutes into the film. And then, on top of that, some sort of blackout occurred, and it took between ten and fifteen minutes before they could set things right and start over at the film's intended beginning.

As it turned out, we could easily have watched *The Life After Death Project* all the way through and still arrived at the theater to catch the beginning of *Iron Man 3*, with time to spare. Neither Barry nor I had ever been to a movie that did not begin at the beginning. It would be just like Forry to play this sort of joke – we interrupted "his" film so we would be sure to catch the beginning of *Iron Man 3* – so with a disembodied spirit's ability to manipulate earthbound electronic devices, he created the glitch and subsequent blackout and made us "miss" the beginning of *Iron Man 3* anyway! I am not claiming that was what actually took place, but it was one ultra-weird experience in a day that featured two of them.

When Barry and I got back from the theater it wasn't long before we got into another disagreement and this one was about, of all things, hats. I told him that I and a couple of my cousins were hat collectors, and I proudly showed him my collection of fedoras, lovingly accumulated through the years.

Barry was in an especially contrary mood that night. Perhaps he hadn't enjoyed *Iron Man 3*. He strenuously asserted that hats were old hat and hardly anyone wears them anymore. I told him I thought hats had come back into fashion of late. He said he never sees any men wearing fedoras, and we went on to debate the semantics of the term "in fashion." I told him I didn't think it was important enough to argue about. He agreed with me for once, but then kept

right on arguing about it.

He even challenged me to name a source of information on hats, implying they were such antiques that few sources remained. I was pleased to be able to recall a specialized website named THE FEDORA LOUNGE – a very small, members-only chat forum I used to visit off and on, but I had not checked it out for several years. By this time, I was sorry I had ever showed him my fedoras and just wanted us to get off the subject of hats.

Earlier, we had talked about Forry's 1963 cross-country tour, during which Forry had visited many of his fans in their homes. After Barry left, I wanted to send him more information about Forry's trip if I could find it online. So, I googled "Forrest J Ackerman 1963 Tour" and in the search results (hold onto your hats) this popped up: "FORREST J ACKERMAN – THE FEDORA LOUNGE."

I clicked the link and found a whole thread about Forry on an unrelated site devoted to hats that has got to be one of the most obscure sites on the internet. And less than an hour earlier, Barry and I had been talking about Forry and THE FEDORA LOUNGE, without any reason to suspect there was any kind of connection between the two at all.

What are the odds?

No, I do not suffer from Mad Hatter's Disease – the thread exists and Paul has seen it, too. My Barry's response when informed of this off-the-charts oddity? He was strangely silent.

VIII. The Invisible Email Man

For me, the synchronicities tend to occur in clusters, followed by long lapses. The most spectacular ones seem to hit after one of these long lapses, as did the heavy hitter I'm about to describe. Sometime in May, 2012, I tried to reply to an email Paul had sent me, and it "disappeared" temporarily, then soon reappeared in my inbox.

Shortly after that, my skeptical and contrary friend, Barry (who nonetheless retained a healthy interest in the case) tried to respond to one of my emails, and HIS disappeared. When I pointed out how strange I thought it was for two separately addressed emails to "wink on and off" at almost the same time, Barry was dismissive: "That sort of thing happens all the time."

I remember thinking, "Maybe he's right – perhaps I am reading too much into these coincidences."

One morning very soon after that, I walked into my computer room to find that my browser, AOL, had shut down. That's not unusual, but what WAS unusual was that my email folder had remained up, completely blank except for one solitary email with the subject: "Paul Jeffrey Davids Wants to be friends on Facebook."

This anomaly happened not once but two days in a row, almost as though some conscious intelligence wanted to refute Barry's opinion. Both times, the one remaining email was the one Paul had sent me after reading my article in *Monster Memories*, inviting me to join his circle of friends on Facebook. Out of all the thousands of emails in my various folders, only that very significant one remained after AOL shut down.

Extremely weird, but even so, The Invisible Email Man was not through "winking" at us. When I told Paul what had happened, he asked me if I had thought to take a picture of the event. I hadn't, but there was no cause to be concerned, because the exact same anomaly repeated itself another two times over the next couple of days, allowing me all the time I needed to get Paul a photo of my computer screen showing the folder with its lone email and the words "You are currently offline" above it. After these four occasions, spaced very closely together in time, this anomaly has never happened again.

This was the series of events that sparked the Facebook debate between my skeptical friend Barry and me. He was not impressed at all; he advised me to contact AOL technical support and have them fix the issue. However, by that time the anomaly had run its course and there was no more "issue" left to fix.

Look carefully at the subject line of the lone email in the photo below: "Paul Davids wants to be friends on Fac." The letters "ebook" of Facebook have been "obliterated," leaving us with "Fac" – "F" for Forry and "ac" for Ackerman. There was room on the line for the full word "Facebook," but an electronic obliteration has taken place. Also, consider this reminder: As mentioned, Forry's name in Esperanto, the artificial language he learned and promoted (in the interest of world peace), is Fojack. "Fac" could be taken as an abbreviated version of "Fojack."

Jack Kelleher's email folder suddenly became empty of all emails except the one stating that Paul Jeffrey Davids wanted to be friends with him on Facebook. But it only says "Fac" – "ebook" is missing.

IX. Hooray for For-Ray

After the death of the great Ray Bradbury in the summer of 2012, I posted several farewell tributes on Facebook. Among them was an image of L.J. Dopp's startling painting which seemed to foretell, with cryptic symbolism, the death of the man Ray credited with inspiring his stellar writing career. I captioned the painting with these words:

Science is no more than an investigation of a miracle we can never explain, and art is an interpretation of that miracle.

RAY BRADBURY

My facebook post continued: "Completed four years before the death of Forrest J Ackerman, the clock in this painting of Forry by L. J. Dopp shows the exact time of Ackerman's death. I thought it was appropriate to post the above quote from Forry's lifelong friend, Ray Bradbury, who has just been reunited

with him."

After making the above post, I turned on the game show *Wheel of Fortune* (something that is not a regular habit with me). It was "Family Week," and there were three pairs of contestants.

Host Pat Sajak was just introducing the first pair, and to my utter astonishment, their last names were ACKERMAN and BRADBURY.

I made a comment about the eerie coincidence on Facebook while the show was still airing. No more than than thirty minutes had elapsed between the time I posted my tribute and the receipt of this synchronistic "message" from Forry and Ray – or, as I call them, "For-Ray" – seemingly in acknowledgment of their receipt of my Facebook tribute.

Thanks, guys-- and keep those cards and letters coming in, from wherever you are…

X. Contact Us

Around the time *The Life After Death Project* premiered on the SyFy Channel in mid-May, 2013, *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine presented a feature article about Paul's project on their website. I emailed a link to this article to several friends whom I thought would be interested. Whenever I include links in an email, I always check to verify that the links work.

Right away I noticed that the subject of the emails I had sent out read "CONTACT US."

That seemed strange (but also strangely appropriate considering the "life-after-death" connection). So even though I had tested the original link at the time I sent the emails, as I always do, I decided to test it again. Somehow, it had gotten switched and instead of the *Life After Death Project* feature, it took you to *Famous Monster*s' contact page.

I then checked my browser history and found that I had, indeed, provided the correct link with the emails. As far as I know, it is impossible for an email link to get switched between sender and recipient, but it looked like that was what happened.

The subject, "CONTACT US," was, of course, suggestive.

Like the Matheson story "Disappearing Act," it contained part of Forry's name, and also, when placed in context with *The Life After Death Project*, evoked images of an invitation to pow-wow with the "nearly" departed.

I finally did manage to get emails with the correct link and subject to my

friends – and right after doing that, I sat down to relax by watching *Jeopardy* and saw with a jolt that one of the contestants was named Forrest. That was the second time Forry's name turned up immediately after I turned on a game show (and I do not watch game shows too often).

I later learned that one of the people to whom I had sent the emails (a cousin of mine named Ann Herley) had died some time before I sent her that email. Hence, I had sent the email with the subject that changed to CONTACT US to someone who had recently joined Forry as a fellow citizen of the "Afterlife Community." Mere coincidence or not, it still gives me chills.

XI. Fadeout

At the beginning of this book, you'll find one of my favorite quotes from Mark Twain, who said: "It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so."

In response to that observation, I have defended myself by trying to reduce what I think I know for sure to a minimum. So regarding all of these phenomena, to the inevitable questions of how, why, and even what, I can only answer – I don't know. I have my theories and opinions, but, informed as they are, they could likely be no better guesses than anyone else could make. I will say that I am still not 100% convinced I am being contacted by Forry himself – it may be some aspect of the human mind, or something about the workings of the universe, that we don't yet understand.

All I know for certain is that the coincidences happened – to me, my friends and others not mentioned here – and that I have described them as accurately as I know how.

If you experience coincidences like these and choose to talk openly about them, some people will assume you're either a liar or a loony, because that's the present default position on things paranormal in our Western culture. Yet significantly, while many books and scholarly treatises have been written on the subject of synchronicity or meaningful coincidence, I know of none that dismiss the phenomenon as a load of rubbish – the position that too many skeptics all too eagerly embrace without a moment's hesitation.

Hard physical evidence, the only type of evidence that will convince a hardcore skeptic, is extremely hard to come by when you are dealing with the ethereal, but Forry seems to be one of the rare cases where proof is forthcoming. As he said ages ago in an issue of *Famous Monsters*: "You want proof? Poof!"

Beyond their obsessive demand for physical proof, many skeptics also

ignore the fact that these coincidences have a distinct personality and an uncanny sense of timing and emphasis of pertinent details. Skepticism, in fact, tends to hamper one's ability to perceive synchronicity.

Don't get me wrong – a degree of skepticism is an essential component of any approach to the paranormal. But there comes a point when truth has been staring you in the face through repeated experience, that it's time to remove your blinders and at the very least admit, "Something remarkable is taking place here. I'm not sure what it is, but I want to learn everything I can about it and keep an open mind."

I think too many skeptics view taking even this small step as an impossibly gigantic leap of faith.

Each of us has to make up his or her own mind when or if we are ready to embrace reality in a new way. Those who are not yet ready will not be convinced by anything or anybody – not even by the evidence of their own senses. However, that situation will change. For centuries, flying was believed to be impossible for humans, the world was undeniably flat, and the sun demonstrably revolved around the earth. Anyone who said otherwise risked not only ridicule but persecution – burning at the stake by the church in the case of Giordano Bruno in the Middle Ages.

In time the paradigms shifted, and as Dr. Gary Schwartz contends, the same shift is now beginning to take place in the wake of cuttingedge scientific research into the afterlife and other paranormal phenomena.

Our troubled society could only benefit from a collective raising of consciousness. So all aboard the mystery train! There's room enough for everyone! Synchronicities are actually a normal part of everyday life. It is simply that most of us have been culturally conditioned to overlook or discount them, which seems to decrease their potency and frequency of occurrence.

I seem to have come full circle. As I write these closing words, the pen I am using is running out of ink. I'm watching the ink slowly fade away like a fond farewell, and I can feel a warm smile spread across my face as it disappears. And perhaps – just perhaps – somewhere The Invisible Ink Man is smiling right back at me.

9. THE MASK FROM ZIMBABWE

Paul Davids here, returning to the throttle after that extraordinary testimony from Jack Kelleher. I mentioned earlier that there were some precursors to the inkblot obliteration at my Santa Fe house, and that there was an important incident involving an African mask.

I only hinted at these things until now, because I wanted to keep the focus on the inkblot, the scientific investigation, the haunted Ackermansion, and also the related experiences of Jack Kelleher. However, now I would like to offer up those other details.

I. Meet Todd Easton Mills

I made frequent trips to Santa Fe in 2008 and 2009, while producing *Before We Say Goodbye* in New Mexico.

I shall describe the living room of our adobe style vacation house there. It has a traditional flat roof and a twelve foot high ceiling and six small windows on two opposite sides of the living room, plus thick wooden beam vigas typical of the Santa Fe adobe style. There is a lot of art on the walls, and there are artifacts on bureaus and tables, including some wood carvings, and at that time there was a tribal mask from Africa in a display case.

That mask was from Zimbabwe and had been used in a dance in a native ceremony in Africa, and then it was purchased by my co-producer on *Timothy Leary's Dead*, Todd Easton Mills, a successful entrepreneur and business owner. Todd's wife was originally from Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and they had been on a trip to Africa in 1983 when they saw that ceremony with the mask. The purpose of their trip was to introduce their children, who had been raised in Los Angeles, to their grandparents for the first time.

When Todd had learned we had purchased the house in Santa Fe, he had quite generously opened the doors of his storage facilities and offered me furniture and decorative objects he had no space for in his home. The mask was

one of the objects he had provided on long term loan, and it had been occupying a place of honor in the living room of our Santa Fe house.

The mask from Zimbabwe on display on our Santa Fe vacation home.

II. The Bowls Are Alive!

Near the mask, on a coffee table that had a stack of magazines, there was a Native American gourd bowl. The bowl has a near match in our house, on another coffee table in a different part of the living room. One bowl is slightly smaller than the other, but they have similar designs.

On a trip to Santa Fe in the late fall of 2008, I was alone in the house and on my way out to visit a local native American casino (where I enjoyed playing blackjack for low stakes), I was carrying a black satchel, and the satchel accidentally knocked into the pile of magazines on the coffee table, scattering them all over the carpet. I had been in a rush and was irritated by my clumsiness.

I got down on hands and knees and picked up all of the magazines and restacked them on the table and then hurriedly left the house. I do not recall seeing the gourd bowl knocked off the table and thought it was still where it was supposed to be.

When I returned to the house, I was surprised to find that gourd bowl on the floor, right near the door to the main floor bedroom. It startled me. I thought to myself: Could I have knocked the bowl onto the floor when the magazines fell? Did I not notice it? How did it get all the way over by the door to the bedroom?

It was in an obvious place – a place where I could not help but notice it while walking into the bedroom. And it seemed unlikely that, if I had knocked it off with the magazines, it would have rolled so far and ended up in an upright position practically in the center of the open doorway to the bedroom.

I put it back on the coffee table and thought little about it, except feeling it was odd – and experiencing a shiver up the spine over it.

I think, but I am not absolutely certain, that the first Native American bowl incident happened soon after Forrest J Ackerman died.

On my next trip to Santa Fe, the morning after I arrived, I woke up, went into the living room, and I noticed that the other gourd bowl of the set was now on the carpet, over by the fireplace. I could not fathom how that one also ended up on the rug, when I kept it on the other coffee table. I did not recollect having moved it and could not think of why I would have put it on the rug and left it there if I had. The movement of those two bowls stuck in my mind as oddities that seemed unusual.

When the ink incident happened on March 18, 2009, it brought back to mind the incidents with the gourd bowls, because I wondered if the three odd incidents were in any way related.

III. Molly and George

The morning after the ink incident, I invited over a Native American female acquaintance who claimed to be psychic. She had claimed to be in touch with spirit guides since she was a child. Normally, I would have dismissed that sort of thing and wouldn't have thought twice about it. However, this friend, whom I will identify only by her first name, Molly, had impressed me the first day she had met me in 2007, not long after we had acquired the Santa Fe house.

That day she met me, which was in early January, 2007, she told me that she had received a message for me right then from someone named "George,"

someone who was very jolly and good-natured and always had a twinkle in his eye and who had a fatherly, protective attitude towards me and my career. I asked her whether George was living or deceased, and she said he was deceased. She said that I was going to win an important award soon, and that George was going to help me win it. She said the award would be round.

To me, at that time, this all seemed like nonsense. I didn't believe in spirits or spirit communication. I could relate to her comments about "George who was deceased" because one of my mentors was the great Hungarian producer/director George Pal, who with his talented wife, Zsoka, fled the Nazis and had a brilliant career in Hollywood, and who died in March of 1980. George was a great friend of Forry Ackerman, and most film scholars would credit George with being the pioneering "Father of Science Fiction Movies." His 1949 film, *Destination Moon*, first set him on the path to earning that title, and it showed many of the concepts which became reality with the first trip to the lunar surface twenty years later, in 1969.

To say George Pal was jolly and good-natured, always with a twinkle in his eye, was a great description of him, and yes he had been fatherly and protective of me and helpful in my career. George Pal was the producer of the original *War of The Worlds* (1953) and producer/director of *The Time Machine* (1960), both masterpieces.

Soon after I finished film school at the American Film Institute, where I had befriended George Pal, he had enlisted me to write a treatment for *The Hobbit*, which he wanted to produce as a film. I co-wrote the treatment with Hollace, and to our dismay, our *Hobbit* was rejected by every studio in Hollywood that George Pal had approached. It had been a very frustrating experience at that time, in 1972.

Of course, we had no crystal ball to know that subsequently Rankin and Bass would produce an animated TV version of *The Hobbit*, and eventually Peter Jackson would produce his own version as a tour-deforce trilogy, when technical advances in special effects permitted a visualization that would have been inconceivable in 1972.

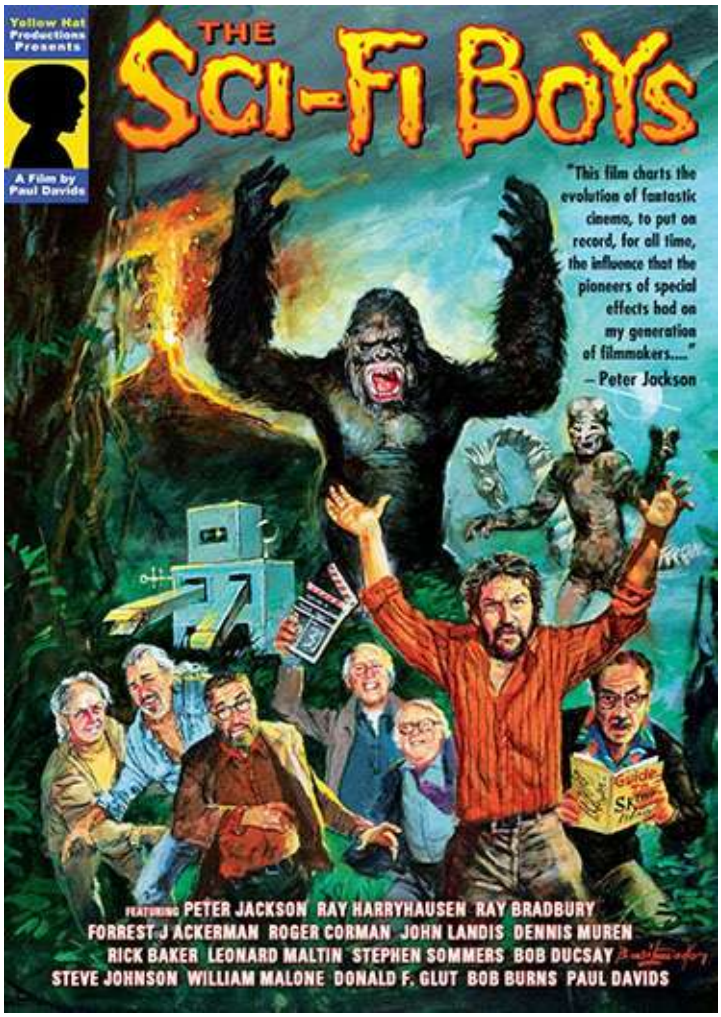
When Molly relayed her psychic message, I certainly would have snickered at the notion that the late George Pal was still looking in on me, and I couldn't think of any round awards, except the Emmys, and I was in no way qualified to win an Emmy then. So I dismissed both Molly and her prediction. However, soon after the prediction, *The Sci-Fi Boys*, the feature documentary that my wife, Hollace, and I had produced together in 2006, was nominated for a Saturn Award as Best DVD of 2006. It was nominated along with five other films, some

of them better known and certainly with larger budgets, so I cautiously concluded that the chances of actually winning were slim.

Then at the elaborate awards ceremony of the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror, they announced that *The Sci-Fi Boys* had won the Saturn Award for Best DVD of the year, and Hollace and I accepted the "round award" at the huge red carpet event in Universal City. There was a banquet, and there were speeches.

There was a lot of press, and photos were taken of us with the award. It was the planet Saturn, with a base to it. Saturn's rings on the award were designed like a strip of 35mm film. The concept that the spirit of the deceased George Pal had helped us to win this award was suddenly not as easy for me to debunk!

Paul and Hollace Davids the night they received the Saturn Award for The Sci-Fi Boys. *As Molly had predicted, that award looks round!*


Yellow Hat Productions Presents
A Film by Paul Davids
THE SCI-FI BOYS
"This film charts the evolution of fantastic cinema, to put on record, for all time, the influence that the pioneers of special effects had on my generation of filmmakers...."
—Peter Jackson
PETER JACKSON RAY HARRYHAUSEN RAY BRADBURY
FORREST J ACKERMAN ROGER CORMAN JOHN LANDIS DENNIS MUREN
RICK BAKER LEONARD MALTIN STEPHEN SOMMERS BOB DUCSAY
STEVE JOHNSON WILLIAM MALONE DONALD F. GLUT BOB BURNS PAUL DAVIDS

The poster for The Sci-Fi Boys.

In *The Sci-Fi Boys*, there is a sequence that was filmed in 2003 at George Pal's grave at Holy Cross Memorial Park in Marina del Rey, California. Forrest J Ackerman had read the eulogy at George Pal's funeral when George Pal had died in 1980. For *The Sci-Fi Boys*, I had invited Forrest J Ackerman to appear at the grave and reread the eulogy while we filmed it for the documentary. So there was a George Pal/Forry Ackerman connection in the award-winning film.

George Pal (left) and Forrest J Ackerman. George looks characteristically jolly in this photo, with a twinkle in his eye as psychic Molly had described him.

IV. EMF Testing

Given the fact that Molly had made what had turned out to be a remarkable prediction the first day she met me, I decided to consult with her after the ink obliteration incident occurred.

Molly came over to our Santa Fe house on March 19th, the morning after the inkblot incident, and she brought with her an electromagnetic field (EMF) reader. Ghost hunters commonly use such meters, looking for elevated EMF fields, to which they often attribute spirit presence. I set up my video camera and filmed her as she tested with the EMF meter. There was nothing unusual by the bed where the inkblot incident occurred. But there were high EMF fields that kept moving around, near the door to the bedroom (where the first gourd bowl had been discovered on the floor months earlier.) Those areas of elevated EMF readings didn't remain in the same place for long – they kept moving a few feet in one direction and then another.

We turned off the wall switch nearby but still got the high EMF readings, especially when she pointed the device at the African mask. The EMF device, which blinked and beeped, went to its maximum measurement level when pointed at the mask. In what was a VERY bizarre moment for me, which is captured on videotape, she pointed the device directly at me while I stood near the bedroom doorway. She moved the sensor from my feet up my body, and as she reached my head, it blinked and beeped to the maximum again. She would

then point it away from me, toward herself, then back to my head, and each time she pointed it at me, there were intense EMF readings that seemed to be coming right from my brain. There were no elevated EMF readings coming from her.

My co-author, Gary Schwartz, visited my Santa Fe house at a later date, and he used a similar EMF meter I had purchased months after the incident. He fulfilled his obligation to himself and his research to be entirely skeptical. He concluded that he had doubts as to whether there was anything paranormal about the EMF readings we had videotaped at the mask and at my head. He found that when he turned on one of the downstairs wall switches in our home, the EMF meter would become excited near where the mask was upstairs and near where I had been standing. Thus he felt that, even though the wall switch right near the mask had no obvious effect, whether it was on or off, the downstairs switch may have enabled the flow of electricity into some wires in the floor or wall on the main floor that had caused our seemingly anomalous readings.

The placement of the African mask in the Davids' Santa Fe living room in 2009.

Similar tribal masks being used in a tribal dance in Zimbabwe.

Paul Davids measuring the EMF around the mask from Zimbabwe, the day after the inkblot obliteration incident.

Gary may be correct, but for me, that does not provide a satisfactory explanation for what we observed. The EMF field kept moving around that day after the inkblot incident. It did not remain at one place for long, but we could track it moving around. Also, the readings both specifically at the mask and at my head were intense, right at those two places.

That precise effect was not duplicated by having the wall switch on downstairs. Also, I have no reason to believe that the downstairs wall switch was

even turned on when we first noticed the EMF fields at the mask and my head. There were no visitors staying at the house, so I kept the downstairs lights off. If Molly had turned them on while checking the magnetic fields downstairs, it's unlikely she would have left them on, however that possibility cannot be dismissed.

I felt very uncomfortable when Molly and I stood near the mask, and for some reason, I began to feel queasy, and my stomach was bloating terribly, very gaseous. I actually began to feel physically ill, right then. (And recall, I had been sick in the bathroom the night before, at the same time the ink obliteration occurred in the adjoining bedroom. Were these symptoms related to that episode?)

I was afraid about what it might mean that the high EMF fields had been measured from my brain. Given what had happened with the ink obliteration, for which there was no explanation whatsoever, and due to my memories of the two apparently moving Native American bowls, at that moment I was willing to entertain the possibility that the African mask was a haunted item of some kind, perhaps even with a curse attached to it.

In retrospect, it seems very reasonable to me that the mask would have been a major item in the house that would most likely have caught Forry Ackerman's attention. He was a collector of masks of all kinds. (Recall the photo of him in Chapter 3 with my son, Scott, with both Scott and Forry holding Forry's alien masks.)

Molly obliged my desire to remove the mask from my home. I actually loaded the mask into my SUV that day and took it to her house, where she ended up being custodian of the mask for many months. She reported numerous "paranormal" things related to the mask during that time, none of which I was able to confirm with evidence apart from Molly's testimony. Some of the things she reported included a skunk letting off its "perfume" under her house near where she kept the mask, fights among her normally tranquil cats that disliked the mask – and her back door, which she had locked before going to bed, being wide open in the morning. Molly lives alone, with a large number of cats (ten or fifteen).

I wanted to give the mask back to Todd, but Todd didn't want it. He rather strongly disagreed with my hunch that the mask could have been cursed in some way. He said if there were anything "supernatural" about that mask, then as far as he was concerned, it was a force of good luck, not bad. He explained that his most successful years in business were the years when that mask had been on display above the mantel in the pink castle he and his wife had purchased. Yes,

you read that correctly – a pink castle. As one of Todd's real estate ventures, he bought a pink castle in southern California. It even had turrets. But still he had no desire for the mask to be sent back to him.

He authorized Molly to try to donate it to a museum, and there were a number of candidates in New Mexico, but they all turned Molly down. They didn't want the mask even as a gift with no strings attached. Molly said these museums had had unpleasant experiences with apparently haunted artifacts.

V. An EVP During EMF Detection

Getting the mask out of my house did not put a close to the issues related to it, by any means. After some passage of time, while carefully examining the video footage I had filmed of the EMF readings around the mask, I noticed an EVP (electronic voice phenomenon).

I brought up this point earlier, but I waited until this chapter to go into detail.

The EVP was a seemingly masculine voice saying just one word on the videotape, and the timing was quite interesting. It occurred right as Molly was moving her EMF meter sensor from pointing at my head (where it went "off the charts") to pointing at herself (where it gave no response).

As mentioned previously, the audible word on the videotape appears to be the name "Lenore." I have listened to it dozens of times, and no other word I can think of fits the sound. I don't know why the name Lenore would be audible there, but I make note of the fact that Lenore is the name of a famous poem by Edgar Allan Poe, and it is also the name of the lost love who is being mourned in Poe's poem "The Raven." I do not know personally anyone named Lenore.

The Poe connection with the mask is something to ponder – first, because of the award-winner envelope Forry had sent me in 1964 which had a stamp of Poe alongside stamps of Santa Fe. Secondly, something uncanny happened to me within about a year, in which I broke an ankle and was bedridden for about six weeks. During those six weeks, I began writing a massive amount of poetry, some serious, others humorous. I had not written poetry since my college days, when a free verse poem ("Wading in a Photograph of Autumn Pond Water") won an award. The new poetry was not free verse but was rhyming.

Several of the poems were about Edgar Allan Poe, about his life and work and his conflict with his father, and about the museum that houses some of his manuscripts in Baltimore. It was as though under the influence of Poe I burst forth with poetic writings of hundreds of pages. These were published in 2012 in

three volumes totaling more than 450 pages.

Forry had been something of a devotee of Edgar Allan Poe. Well, that's an understatement. He was infatuated with Poe, obsessed with Poe. His magazines had been filled with references to Poe's stories and films based on Poe's works.

I was thoroughly plagued with bewilderment and wonder. What caused all these inter-connections and synchronicities, as well as the poetic outpouring that I had never experienced before in my life?

Soon following the discovery of these apparent oddities involving the mask, I was on the phone to Todd Easton Mills at great length. One of the first things he told me, that startled him, was that before I called him he had received a phone call from his sister in Chicago, and she had related to him at some length a weird dream she had the night before about invisible ink. He thought it was a very curious synchronicity that his sister would call him about invisible ink shortly before he received a phone call from me about the mysterious inkblot.

Initially, Todd was very dismissive about the inkblot incident. He kept insisting that it must have been a glitch caused by my printer when the page was being printed. I kept explaining that no, that was not possible, because I know the document had dry ink when I picked it up from the printer. I explained that I did not collect it from the printer for almost two hours after giving the print command. I told him that I had looked over the first few pages and that everything about it was ordinary and clean, at first. I also explained that when I first saw the blacked out words, the ink, or whatever was used to make the blackout, was still wet. I could see the moisture of it glisten from the overhead light of the room, and there was also a lamp on the end table beside the bed.

No matter how hard I tried to explain the facts to Todd, he could not integrate it and continued to be dismissive. However, he did admit that it was odd he had received the call from his sister.

VI. Todd and the Slides from Africa

He told me that he had a carousel tray of slides he had taken in 1983 showing the mask when it was used in the tribal ceremonial dance in Africa near Victoria Falls. He said he knew right where the slides were, and that he would locate them so he could scan some and email the digital files to me.

It was a shock to Todd when he looked for the slides. He had about a hundred boxes of slides from his various world travels, all in temperature-controlled storage, and all neatly organized in carousel trays. The Kodak carousel tray was a popular type of container for slide projection back when

projection was the main way that families would look at family slides. Many American families, from the 1950's up until the advent of color computer imagery, owned slide projectors and portable screens that they would set up in their recreation rooms.

Todd reported back to me that every single slide in every one of his carousel tray boxes was locatable except for the slides from that 1983 trip to Africa when they had acquired the Zimbabwe mask. He found the box marked 1983 Zimbabwe, and inside was an EMPTY carousel tray. There were no slides at all in that one carousel tray. Furthermore, the plastic lock that was designed to keep the slides from falling out of the tray was still in place. The slides had been removed, and the lock had been snapped back onto the empty tray. It was extremely mysterious.

More than six years have passed, and those slides have never been located. It baffles Todd and upsets him greatly. He says no one in the family would have touched those slides or taken them out of the tray. He has asked every family member. He says everyone knew that the slides were extremely precious to him, and no one would ever tamper with them because Todd is the custodian for them.

I offered several hypotheses – for example, was it possible one of his kids took them to school to show in class, and the school had a different type of slide projector, so they were moved from the carousel into another type of tray and then somehow forgotten? Todd insists that could not have happened, that it is impossible, and his children, both of whom are grown up now and married, deny that ever happened. His wife, a skeptic about all things paranormal, denies ever having touched them either.

Todd's slide box and carousel tray that was supposed to have his 1983 photos of his trip to Zimbabwe. The slides have vanished and have not reappeared in six years since the incident with the mask the day after the ink obliteration.

Whenever the strange incidents that happened to me are discussed with Tricia, Todd's wife, she always says that as hard as it is for her to believe in anything having to do with spirits or the paranormal, it still baffles her greatly that their slides of the mask have never shown up, though they have the box and the empty carousel tray.

There are two other very important mask moments that took place, apart from the Zimbabwe mask and the Bela Lugosi bowtie that Jack Kelleher bought that was delivered to him attached to a mask replica of the famous face of Lugosi.

VII. The Huichol Mask

In my home in Los Angeles, we hosted a small, champagne birthday party for Rebekah del Rio, the actress/singer who appeared in David Lynch's film *Mulholland Drive*, in which she sang Roy Orbison's "Crying" in Spanish. Rebekah was there with her then-husband, Eric Skotnes, and the music composer Brian Thomas Lambert was there with his wife Margaret. Hollace was also there.

In our dining room, where the party took place, a framed painting of Forry and Wendayne is on display.

This double-portrait, in the Davids' dining room of their Los Angeles home, was a Christmas gift to Forry and Wendayne in 1987 from Lewis Coates.

It was one of Forry's two favorite paintings of himself and his wife.

Opposite that painting, on the other side of the dining room, is a Huichol bead mask from Mexico in the shape of a face. It hung by a single nail behind a tall standing lamp. During the party, someone cracked an innocent remark, and in a devilish spirit, I turned the remark into a dirty joke by twisting a few words around. Everyone cracked up, and at that very instant, everyone saw the Huichol mask fly out from the wall and over the standing lamp to land right at my feet. It was as though the mask leaped, like a sort of applause line or exclamation point to my joke. It felt as though Forry was saying bravo in full approval of the off-color joke.

The Huichol mask that flew forward off the wall in the Davids' Los Angeles dining room in front of witnesses.

Well, we seem to be a little bit pregnant with this topic, so I'll tell you the joke. We had been talking about dieting and rich foods, and one of the ladies said she didn't like to spend much time on lunch. She said, "For lunch, just give me something warm – maybe a hot dog – and I'll stick it in my mouth and get it over with quickly."

And I said, "Is that your philosophy of sex, too?"

And BANG, at that instant, the mask flew off the wall and over the lamp, landing at my feet, and everyone saw it.

VIII. The Forry Mask

The crowning moment involving masks occurred on February 21, 2013, the very day I learned that *The Life After Death Project* had been accepted to be broadcast on Syfy Channel. The mask of Forry that I had obtained at the Ackerman estate auction was perched on top of a display case. The display case housed the audio-animatronic alien prop from *Roswell*, the 1994 Showtime movie that I executive produced and co-wrote.

The mask had not been moved in four years.

All the windows in my office are always closed, and there was nobody in the house while I went out for lunch and took a quick trip to the Norton Simon Museum with a friend (Janine Cooper Ayres). The cat was outside the house,

and the door to my office was closed.

The plastic mask of Forry's face where it had been in Paul Davids' home office for four years, without ever being moved. This mask had been on display in the Ackermansion on a dummy of Forry in his 1939 World Science Fiction Convention costume.

There is also a sign in my office that Forry used at his personal appearances that said: "MEET FM'S LEGENDARY EDITOR FORREST J ACKERMAN."

This sign mentioning "FM" (Famous Monsters) *was on a file cabinet across Paul Davids' office from the mask of Forry. This sign was used by Forry at many of his public appearances.*

While driving to the museum, I was startled when a black car pulled in front of me with a vanity plate that said AM LOVES FM (with a heart symbol meaning "loves").

It caught my attention instantly, and I took a picture of it, because it was as though that license plate held a special message for me: ACKERMAN (or ACKERMONSTER…. AM) LOVES FM – or FAMOUS MONSTERS.

When I opened the door to my home office about an hour and a half later, to my absolute shock, I saw that the mask of Forry's face had moved across the room. No longer perched on top of the display case, it was about eight or ten feet away, on the floor, nose down in my computer hard drive wires. (A friend later interpreted it to mean that Forry was telling me he had his nose in my computer!)

I took it as a sign. There was nothing in the house or room that could have moved that mask. No open windows, no drafts, no vents, no animals – and it was the only thing in the room that was out of place. It was a lightweight object, and this was in a way reminiscent of the papers that had "scattered by themselves" from Dr. John Allison's dining room chair to the floor. But this was highly specific. It was Forry's face. And this was more than a synchronicity, this was another unexplained physical phenomenon. What could have been a more direct sign? And it came shortly after the car with the AM LOVES FM license plate had swerved in front of me in Pasadena.

A car pulled in front of Paul with a license plate with a heart for the word "loves": "AM LOVES FM"

Paul took this photo at the time to show where the mask of Forry's face had moved, across the room, face-down with his nose in the wires for the computer hard drives.

To me, these incidents seemed to signal awareness of the special importance of that day, because that morning I had received word that *The Life After Death Project* would be broadcast on Syfy. This was the second time I would be privileged to have that network present to the world one of my projects about Forrest J Ackerman. The first, as previously mentioned, had been *The Sci-Fi Boys* in 2006, when the channel was called the Sci-Fi Channel. That very name, of course, was coined by Forry in the 1950s, but the only acknowledgement of that fact from the network was the very brief presentation of that information in my film, *The Sci-Fi Boys*, which happened to mention it.

Yes, Forry was one of the most prominent collectors of masks of all kinds, from monster tribute masks to Halloween masks and movie prop masks.

From the moment of the Zimbabwe mask incident and the unexplained disappearance of Todd Mills' slides, to the Huichol mask that popped off the wall at a punchline to a joke, to the mask of Forry's face that moved, Forry seemed to be reminding us that masks were one of his ways of defining himself and his collection.

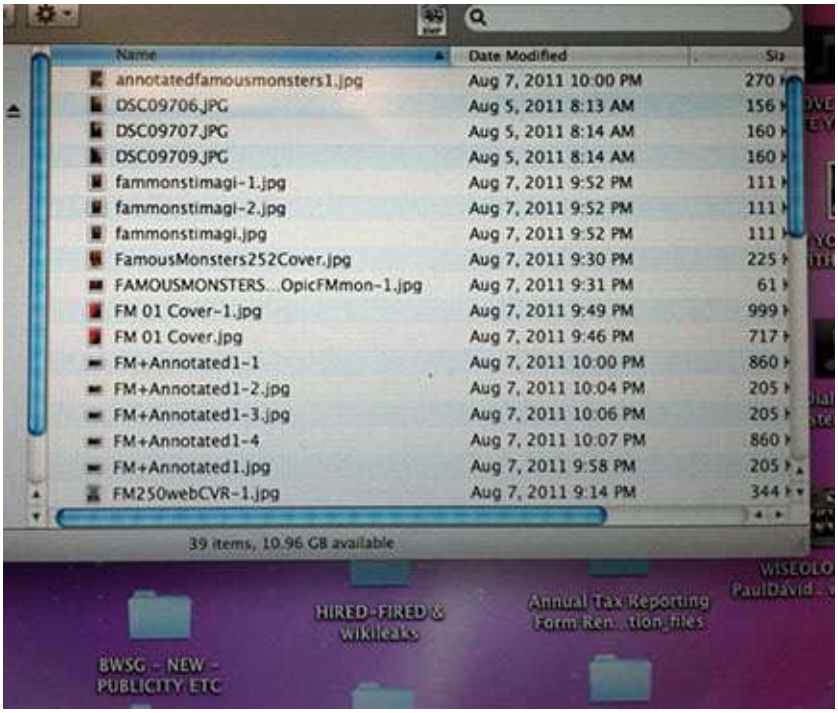
No sooner had I returned the mask of Forry to its proper place than my computer inexplicably went down. (I had left it on during lunch and the trip to the Norton Simon Museum). This occurred in my film editing room, where I have a Mac with a Final Cut Pro program, a separate monitor and about 20 hard drives. Eight of those hard drives are either six terabytes or eight terabytes each,

so the memory power for making films is enormous.

There was no reason for my computer suddenly to turn itself off – no more reason for that to happen than there was for the computer in Dr. Jay Siegel's lab to have turned itself on to a specific program without any human intervention.

In this case, when I rebooted my Mac, the computer screen and separate monitor both displayed open folders that had not been open when it went down. One of the folders was filled with articles about Forrest J Ackerman; the other was filled with articles and cover photos of *Famous Monsters*.

If ever there was a moment, during all the years from March, 2009 (the original ink incident), to February of 2013, that I felt total, unambiguous certainty that the spirit of the late Forrest J Ackerman was the force behind all these unexplained hijinks – that was the precise instant.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FM250webCVR-1.jpg Aug 7, 2011 9:14 PM
39 items, 10.96 GB available
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Annual Tax Reporting Form Ren...tion files
BWSG - NEW - PUBLICITY ETC

After the computer suddenly shut down on its own, when Paul rebooted, one of the screens was filled with these files that reference Famous Monsters. *This folder had not been open before the shut-down*.

For those who have seen the 2014 science fiction movie *Transcendence* starring Johnny Depp, it was a bit like in that film when a deceased and digitized Johnny Depp is resurrected within a computer and lives online and is then able to influence many world events that have the appearance of inexplicable magic.

Except what was happening to me was not science fiction!

10. A LONG, WINDING ROAD TO TUCSON

I. Bad Jeans

Before We Say Goodbye, the film I was producing and directing from before the inkblot obliteration, and which I completed in 2010, was a labor of love. Most of the actors were New Mexico stage actors, including those who had appeared in the play on which the film was based, which was called *We Are Hispanic-American Women…Okay*?

One day we filmed at the home of an archaeologist who had an extensive library. One of the characters in the story, named Antonia, is an archaeologist. In the story, Antonia has a scene with her sister, Marisa, in which they discuss Marisa's financial disasters. I was directing the scene, and I was wearing a pair of blue jeans. Someone on the set interrupted at one point to say to me: "What's happening to your jeans?"

My blue jeans were dissolving in front of everyone's eyes. That's right, dissolving.

The blue denim dissolved as Paul kept directing the film in front of cast and

crew. Everyone saw it and laughed, saying "What's happening to your pants?"

The blue fabric had begun to dissolve in various places leaving only white threads. I reacted to this very strangely at the time. It was as though I was getting used to paranormal things happening, and I felt impelled to get through the scene we were filming without stopping. I told everyone I didn't know why that was happening, and I kept working and reworking the scene, doing many takes from many angles. And as I kept working, more of the blue jeans vanished.

Another part of the pair of jeans Paul was wearing.

By the time we were done filming at that location in Las Vegas, New Mexico, it was actually rather embarrassing. The jeans were a total wreck, and I had no explanation for it. I had not subjected them to any chemicals. They had been in my closet at home in Los Angeles and then in the closet in Santa Fe. If they had been to the dry cleaners or laundry, that would have been in Los Angeles, days before. If the laundry had gotten some kind of chemical on the jeans, why wouldn't the dissolving have happened already, rather than beginning while I was working on the set?

When we took a break, I went directly to a nearby mall to get another pair of pants. It was a Target or another low-cost chain store, and as I recall they had no changing room. I remember being so embarrassed that I actually changed my

pants standing by my car out in the parking lot. I stripped down to my underpants, pulled off the jeans, and I slipped into the new pair of pants.

To my astonishment, the moment I took off the jeans, the dissolving apparently stopped right then and there. The white threads and loss of blue fabric was visible over much of the jeans. If there had been some sort of caustic material causing it, why wouldn't it have irritated the skin of my legs? There was no irritation at all.

I felt as if I were becoming a poster boy for paranormal incidents, and the jeans seemed as if they fit the category of being more evidence. So I put them into a large plastic bag and sealed it. I ended up bringing them with me to New Jersey, when I went to see Dr. John Allison. I thought maybe he could try to explain that too! (He tried to no avail.)

II. Anne and Whitley Strieber

Sometime after I returned from seeing Dr. Allison at the College of New Jersey, my wife, Hollace, and I had lunch in Santa Monica with Whitley Strieber and his wife, Anne. Whitley, of course, is the bestselling author of many science fiction books, but he is best known for his books about his experiences with what he called "The Visitors," presumed by Whitley to be aliens or interdimensional beings of some kind. His book, *Communion*, about his recollections of his apparent "alien abduction" from his home in the woods of upstate New York, was a national sensation. Whitley and I had known one another since the mid-1990s, in the aftermath of the release of my Showtime film, *Roswell*.

I had not seen much of Whitley, because he had lived in Texas for so long, and our connection had been limited to occasionally running into one another at UFO-related conferences. However, I had learned that Whitley had moved to Santa Monica, and so we set the lunch. I knew of his keen interest in unusual phenomena of all kinds, and I was determined to see how he would view the strange things that had been happening to me.

At our lunch, I learned that both Whitley and Anne had a very strong interest in the topic of life after death. I showed them a photo of the ink obliteration, and I told them why I suspected it was in some way connected to Forrest J Ackerman in the afterlife.

Anne told us that she had interviewed many people who wrote books in the field of afterlife research, or who had researched the topic in some way. She offered to put me in touch with a number of those people, including a hospice

care physician, Dr. John Lerma, and also the world-renowned author Richard Matheson, who wrote *What Dreams May Come*, a very famous novel about the afterlife (and a film of the same title starring Robin Williams).

She told me that Glennys MacKay, whom she and Whitley described as a superb medium from Australia, would be coming to Los Angeles, so we might meet. She also urged me to make an appointment to visit Dr. Gary Schwartz in Tucson, Arizona. At that point, I had not heard of Gary Schwartz. She told me he was a tenured professor at the University of Arizona who had moved to the Southwest after a college teaching career that included the psychology departments of both Harvard and Yale.

Whitley Strieber with his wife, the late Anne Strieber, who passed away in 2015 after a long illness. Anne introduced Paul Davids to Dr. Gary Schwartz, and she has an executive producer credit (which she shares with Hollace Davids) on The Life After Death Project.

Gary Schwartz, she explained, had spent over fifteen years studying life after death by doing experiments with psychic mediums. He had applied scientific methods for identifying mediums with real psychic abilities, separating them from pretenders, frauds, hoaxers and wannabes. Also, he has written many books on the subject of afterlife.

Another author Anne arranged for me to interview was Dannion Brinkley, whose book, *Saved by The Light*, had been an extraordinary bestseller. It was based on Dannion's near-death experience after being struck by lightning.

Actually, by some accounts, Dannion Brinkley had a death experience, not a near death experience, because his heart had stopped beating, he had no respiration and no EKG readings. He had flatlined, experienced a life beyond this one, and then life returned to his body. Though the exact nature of his physical condition at that time is still being debated by some, he is firm in his conviction that he experienced a world beyond this one. He has been a major public speaker attempting to educate the public that life does not end with physical death.

Although I planned to film all the interviews I would undertake and had filmed in the chemists' laboratories, my focus at that time was not on filmmaking. I was simply collecting material and information. I was still focused on trying to solve the mystery of the anomalies I had been experiencing. However, I began to realize that, with all of these interviews lined up, I would probably have the makings of a feature documentary film. As you know, it eventually became two documentaries: *The Life After Death Project (Parts 1 and 2).*

III. Richard Matheson

The immortal author Richard Matheson passed away in June of 2013, but I was very fortunate to have a chance to interview him four years before his death. The interview with him took place on June 17, 2009, at his sprawling ranch-style home in Southern California.

I had been a fan of Richard Matheson ever since I had seen *The Incredible Shrinking Man* when I was a child. When I was a pre-teen, I had also seen many *Twilight Zone* episodes he had written.

Of all his books with which I was familiar, my favorite was *Bid Time Return*, previously mentioned by Jack Kelleher, which became a film called *Somewhere in Time*, starring Christopher Reeve and Jane Seymour. I had first read it while working at the Paul Kohner Agency, when it was submitted as a possible project for Charles Bronson. I had also seen the film *What Dreams May Come* and knew the producer, Steven Deutsch (who somewhere during his career changed his name to Steven Simon.)

The Matheson interview took some wonderful twists and turns. Richard Matheson had been a very good friend of Forrest J Ackerman. Mr. Matheson was committed to a belief in life after death. His views of afterlife were not influenced by any religion but were deeply interconnected with his view of the nature of the universe and reality. He believed that deceased people sometimes

come to visit those they knew or loved in dreams, which are not just invented by the subconscious mind while sleeping. The example of Joe Moe thinking he had an extraordinary dream of Forry coming to him – and then Forry physically validating the visit for me with a printed message – fits precisely into the view of cosmic reality held by the late Mr. Matheson. Also, he had heard from many people after writing *What Dreams May Come*. He'd learned that many people shared his impressions about the afterlife – that life after death may prove to be a sort of personal experience unique for each of us.

Richard Matheson and Paul Davids together in Matheson's home.

I was both surprised and pleased at how completely Richard Matheson embraced the possibility that his friend, Forrest J Ackerman, although deceased, had been the force and intelligence behind the ink obliteration. He stated clearly in the interview that it made perfect sense to him that Forry, who had never believed in an afterlife while living, was "correcting himself" posthumously by letting me know that he still exists. He also expressed his views about scientists – that they have extraordinary problems dealing with evidence that suggests there are realms that transcend their understanding or the capacity of science to explain.

IV. Digging up Randi Plants with Gary Schwartz

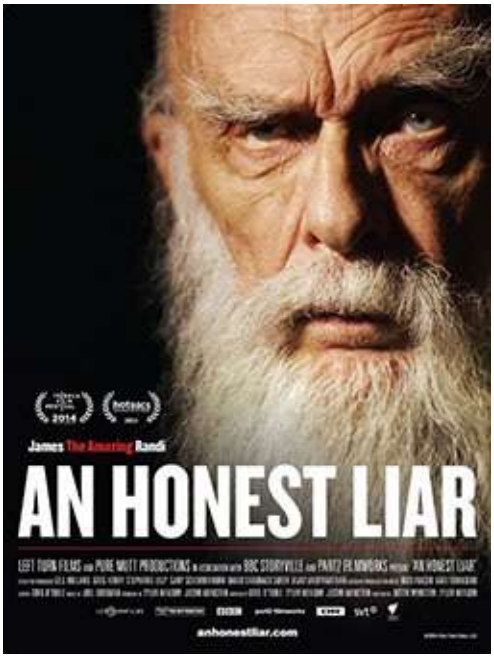
When I called Dr. Gary Schwartz, he was eager to hear about my anomalous experiences. I did not know it at the time, however, but he inwardly reacted with a stalwart sense of caution.

At some point, Gary revealed to me his concerns about what he called "Randi plants." James Randi, a magician known as "The Amazing Randi," is an arch-debunker, and neither Gary nor many of his colleagues feel Randi has been fair to them or objective about the evidence in this field, especially when it comes to evaluating and testing mediums, which has been a specialty of Gary Schwartz.

For the record, though neither Gary nor I agree with James Randi's rejection of all paranormal claims, James Randi has on occasion done a skilled job of unmasking outright frauds. There is one case of a Christian faith healer that is especially well documented – the case of Peter Popoff, who initially rose to prominence in the 1980s. In 1986, James Randi exposed his method of receiving supposedly divine revelations from his wife via an earphone radio receiver

Gary is frequently beyond cautious – to the point of suspicion – when new people and cases come into his life. He is always on the defense against the possibility of being set up by a fake. That would be his definition of a Randi plant – someone sent by the debunkers with an invented story seeking to get his validation for it.

That kind of action could hurt the credibility and reputation of a scientist, unfairly calling into question his other experimental results. I was aware that the technique had been used against the late Dr. John Mack, a tenured Harvard professor and psychiatrist who had devoted many years to researching claims of purported alien abductions. He was set up and tarnished in a major article in Time magazine. He had won a Pulitzer Prize (for his book on Lawrence of Arabia) and had done some outstanding work on the mystery of possible alien/human contact. However, he was greatly embarrassed by falling for a totally fabricated case.



A poster for a documentary film biography about James Randi.

So here's how Gary's and my relationship started out: He declared to me, unambiguously and in a frighteningly serious tone of voice, that if I were lying to him, he would have to kill me. One always wants to take that kind of remark with a sense of humor, but Gary made it clear that he had discovered and exposed a deceptive psychic, and I could not take his good will for granted if in fact I was a wolf in sheep's clothing. He would expose me. He would tell the world that I was a fraud.

Hearing the warning, I could do no more than swear to him that I am telling the truth, and that I am not making up anything. I pointed out that he would have not only my word for it, about the truly anomalous nature of the ink obliteration, but that top scientists at the University of Indiana and the College of New Jersey had been working on it and could not explain the phenomenon that happened to me.

With those issues clarified, Gary's enthusiasm for proceeding bubbled forth, and we agreed that I would come to Arizona to see him at his home and at his Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health.

Gary set an appointment with me, and I drove to Tucson by way of Sedona, Arizona. In Sedona, I filmed several other interviews, including one with Dr. Bill Tiller, formerly a Stanford Professor of Materials Science and Physics, Dr. Lynne Kitei (a medical doctor with an anomalous photo to present that had implications for life-after-death) and David Sereda. However, the encounter with

David Sereda left me with a major issue to contend with by the time I met Gary and his Gary's wife, Rhonda. (To our mutual surprise, Rhonda and I soon realized we had met in 1995 in Cody, Wyoming, at a conference about Mars exploration and Martian enigmas.)

David Sereda had been experimenting with extremely powerful, small magnets. Mysteriously, during the interview or while setting up my camera in his living room, without either of us being aware of it, one of those magnets became firmly attached to part of my camera near the compartment that contains the videocassette. It completely erased the Bill Tiller interview and half of the interview with Lynne Kitei, but I had no hint of that at the time.

After meeting Gary, as I set up my camera to interview him, we first had to solve the mystery as to why the camera was not working. Then it became obvious that my last tape, which was still in the camera, had been destroyed. This inauspicious beginning to our relationship wasn't exactly the professional appearance I had been hoping to convey.

After struggling over this problem for nearly half the time we had set aside for the interview, we at last discovered the magnet stuck to the camera and then had to figure out how to get it off. It was so strong, it was excruciatingly difficult to remove. Eventually, we managed to slide it off, and Gary put it on his refrigerator, where at that moment it was so firmly attached it seemed unlikely ever to budge again.

With the crisis behind us, I did a splendid interview with Gary about his research with mediums. As this is a co-authorship, I leave it to Gary to give the background, methodology and results of his mediumship research.

Suffice it to say that about an hour and a half into our interview, he made a proposal. He explained that Catherine Yunt, one of the mediums who had participated in his research program, lived nearby in Tucson, and perhaps she would be willing to do a blind reading for me. He would call her up and suggest it without telling her my name or anything about me, nor mentioning whom it was on the "Other Side" that I wanted to contact.

Catherine agreed, and in the mid-afternoon we reconvened at her house. I was identified only as "the man with the camera who knew someone who had died whom I would like to hear from." As Catherine began, she said it would help her considerably if at least she were given the first name of the deceased person. And so she was given the name "Forrest."

What followed over the next hour or more was remarkable for me and has grown more remarkable with the passage of time, as I have learned some information about Forry that I did not know before.

Much more about Catherine's psychic reading will be found in Chapter 12.

Dr. Gary Schwartz, co-author of this book, who has studied mediums for over 15 years under the auspices of the University of Arizona, Tucson.

Catherine Yunt, a high school math teacher turned professional medium.

Forry pointing with his eyebrows raised. His tendency to make an expression with raised eyebrows was one of the things Catherine Yunt picked up about him.

The big sculpture of Forrest J Ackerman by Casey Wong even has raised eyebrows. Casey met Forry when Casey was four years old, when his father took him to see the Ackermansion.

11. MYSTERIES OF THE MISSING

From the time of the incident with my Native American bowls, I had experienced objects apparently moving from one place to another without obvious explanation. Yes, there was the seemingly remote possibility that I had been responsible for those bowls moving, perhaps by having knocked one off the coffee table along with the magazines that were pushed to the floor by my satchel and failing to notice it when I picked up the magazines.

That seemed very unlikely because of how far away the bowl was – and the way it was positioned on the floor practically at the doorway to the master bedroom. And perhaps I had moved the other bowl to the floor for some reason I could not remember, but I had not used it for serving snacks, and I hadn't needed to clear off that other coffee table.

So only a case of extreme forgetfulness and lack of awareness could have explained it. However, soon the seemingly prankish incidents were not a matter of objects merely moving.

I. The Hiding Easel

As with the letter on my dining room table that had been replaced briefly by a blank sheet of corporate stationery, only to have the letter reappear right where it was supposed to be, now there were other things disappearing but not always reappearing. I have discussed the fact that, in the case of Todd Mills' slides of the African mask in Zimbabwe, they never reappeared. However, there are other examples.

My film, *Jesus in India*, had been accepted to be shown in the December 2009 Santa Fe Film Festival, which was a couple months away. Although the key art, or image for the poster, had been finalized, I did not yet have a full-size, mounted poster to be used in the festival. However, I was certain I would have it ready on my next trip back to Santa Fe, and past experience had taught me that festivals are sometimes short of easels for displaying posters. So while I was in

Hobby Lobby, the day before departing Santa Fe for Los Angeles, I bought a collapsible display easel. It was in a small box about two feet long and a few inches square.

I didn't have time to open the easel box and try it out before leaving, so I put the box in plain sight where it would be easy for me to find upon my return. I left it on the bar in the recreation room near the flat screen TV. I was sure that assembling the easel – and mounting the final movie poster – would be two of the first things I would do when I got back to New Mexico.

You can imagine my surprise, then, when several weeks later I was back in Santa Fe, and I could not find the unopened box with the display easel. No one in Santa Fe had the key to the house at that time – just a friend up in Los Alamos – and that friend had not been to the house, and there had been no break-in. Nothing else had been disturbed – just the box with the easel, which seemed to have vanished.

My frustration over the missing easel worked me into a fit. I searched everywhere in the house for it. I certainly searched in my office. There is a small black cubby, the height of my desk that adjoins the desk. I know I searched the cubby, because at one point I needed a ream of paper, and that was one of the places I thought that the paper might be. I checked the top and every shelf of that cubby while looking for the ream of paper. The easel definitely was not there.

I told numerous people about the missing easel. One friend in Santa Fe, who had known Forrest J Ackerman (Diana Thatcher, a caregiver for the elderly), was ready to accept that it was another prank from that "trickster" Forry. She, like another Santa Fe friend, Elizabeth Baker, had been following all of the odd happenings that took place, because I kept telling them about them.

Days went by. I thoroughly cross-examined my friend who had the key to the house, because the only possible logical explanation was that she had been inside the house, despite her firm denials, and that she had taken the easel or moved it. However, her insistence was firm that she had not been down to Santa Fe at all from Los Alamos since my last trip to town, and she had certainly not given my key to anyone, and she had no interest in or use for my easel whatsoever.

I was almost getting to the point of going out to buy another easel. Edward T. Martin came to visit, the man who appears throughout *Jesus in India*, who had written the book upon which the feature documentary was loosely based. Ed was going to participate in the film festival screening and was looking forward to meeting other filmmakers and the patrons of the festival. I told him about the easel, describing the box to him. He also did a thorough search for it and did not

find it. My office was one of the places he searched.

Ed and I occupied the house alone for those days leading up to the film festival.

A day or two before the festival, I went downstairs to my office, and to my total shock, the unopened box for the easel that I had bought at Hobby Lobby was right on top of the cubby. It was the same cubby where I had searched for a ream of paper, and the easel was located right next to my computer. It was absolutely impossible that it had been there all the while, and that I had not noticed it. I examined the box carefully. Clearly nobody had borrowed it to use it, because the easel was still in the original, sealed packaging.

Edward T. Martin, my house guest, was already a believer in spirits. He has lived most of his life convinced that he has spirit guides. In any event, he's convinced the spirit of Forry was playing with him the night he packed up to depart Santa Fe. I was downstairs in the house where the ink obliteration had occurred. The DVD player had suddenly stopped working, and I was very distracted, down on the floor of the recreation room trying to fix it. Ed made repeated trips from the downstairs room, where he had stayed during his visit, to the garage to load his car. The garage door to the house exterior was closed, so he deliberately left the door between the kitchen and the garage open each time he put items in his car. Every time he brought other things upstairs to pack, he found the door closed. There was no open window or anything else that could cause a breeze to shut that door. It is not faulty, and it has never closed by itself before. Ed said that, to his shock and excitement, it closed three or four times while he packed, and no one touched it. In fact, I was on my belly on the floor of that rec room the whole time. I was unresponsive to Ed's several explanations that I just had to come up and see about the door. To my surprise, as soon as Ed finished packing and the door phenomenon ceased, the DVD player I had been struggling to fix suddenly started working again without my doing anything specific to cause it to "return to life." Like the incident with the easel, Edward T. Martin attributes the mysterious door behavior to Forry. When I called him to double-check the details as I was writing this, he told me, to use his phrase, that Forry was "tweaking our nipples" that night.

The list of anomalous incidents at the Santa Fe house kept growing longer, but the strangest had to be the apports, whether it be ink appearing strategically on a document or clothing and the easel disappearing – and in the case of the easel (and one of my sport coats) later reappearing.

I had heard from a friend a great many details about "apports." The friend, Carl Langspecht, was a sensitive who gave psychic readings for small fees in a

New Age bookstore in Albuquerque. I interviewed him for the documentary. He explained that apports are objects that vanish and then reappear in an obvious place – usually small objects like jewelry. He let me film a feather he kept in an envelope in his office in the bookstore. He claimed that it was a hawk feather, and that it had just appeared one day in the middle of the table in his office, and the office had been locked the night before. No one had entry to it. And the day before, he had been discussing the symbolism of hawks with a client and how they represent clear-sightedness. Thus, his mystery of the appearing hawk feather was, in a sense, similar to my appearing and disappearing display easel.

II. The Hiding Trousers

There was another episode with trousers, in addition to the dissolving pants. Just before a trip to Santa Fe, shortly before the first anniversary of Forry's passing, I purchased several pairs of new pants at Ross Department Store in Pasadena. I remember pulling into a parking space at Ross, getting out and noticing that the car right in front of me in the lot, facing me, had a license plate with "Mo" – a synchronicity that called to mind Joe Moe, who of course I always associate with Forry.

I got into Santa Fe on the anniversary of Forry's death, and I recall unpacking and hanging up all the clothes in my suitcase. As the clock neared the time Forry had died (accounting for the one hour difference in time between New Mexico and California), I went to my office and began to search for images of Forry online, and I downloaded every photo I could find. I kept doing that right through the exact moment he had passed one year before, as a sort of personal demonstration of respect and loyalty.

I wondered if this might be followed by another inkblot episode. In fact, I left out a sheet of paper that had typewriting on it, that had both Forry's name and the name of producer George Pal. I suggested to Forry's unseen spirit that perhaps he would like to use that sheet of paper to leave me another message, and that I would appreciate it if he would.

When I awoke, that paper was exactly as I had left it. There was no inkblot. However, when I entered the large walk-in closet and looked for fresh clothes to wear, there were plenty of shirts hanging on hangars, but there were no trousers at all. A quick look around told me that the only pair of pants was the one I had worn on the plane the day before, which I had left hanging over a chair in the master bedroom. There were absolutely no pants in the closet or anywhere else. The new trousers I had bought at Ross were missing when I woke up that

morning.

I wracked my brain trying to make these facts jibe with my sense of reality. Was it possible, I asked myself, that I had forgotten to pack any pants? Had I only thought that I had hung them up, when I had unloaded my shirts and my underwear? It seemed totally improbable to me, especially since I felt I had a recollection both of packing them and of unloading them from the suitcase. Could I rule out that possibility, however? That is often a problem with certifying unexplained incidents. If we don't have a photo of what the closet looked like the night before, how can we be certain?

Though I was upset, I had to laugh at the possibility that the spirit of Forry had somehow absconded with several pairs of my new trousers. What would he need them for? Would they show up, I wondered? Would they end up with someone else? And why now was there a second incident involving pants? Was there some significance, something he was implying in a symbolic way?

In fact, I believe those trousers were never found, either in Santa Fe or Los Angeles. There were two unworn pairs of pants in my closet back in Los Angeles. However, I did not think those were the ones I bought that day at Ross.

In retrospect now that it is about six years later, I think it is interesting to reflect on how these incidents with pants and blue jeans in a certain sense predicted something that was to become an important aspect of my life.

III. The Good Pants in my Life

In 2013, I joined forces with an Albuquerque artist named Russell Metzger. Together we created many works of art – mixed media collage oil paintings – that all incorporate fabrics that are chemically-treated. The fabrics are usually trousers – specifically blue jeans.

Our artistic work with this technique became so recognized that in 2014 we were invited to have an art exhibition by the Ritz-Carlton of Laguna Niguel, California, of thirteen of those works, and all but two utilized trousers. In fact, learning that we had used Wrangler jeans, Wrangler released internet publicity announcing that through our work, Wranglers had become "true works of art."

In that respect, the incidents with the jeans and the missing pants might be interpreted as harbingers or predictions of a phase of my life that had not yet occurred, much as the envelope stamps of Poe and Santa Fe were predictors, and Forry's signature above "The Invisible Ink Men Strike Again" was a predictor.

I told a number of people about the missing trousers that week, especially

Elizabeth Baker, a friend from the film world who directed numerous documentaries in New Mexico. Elizabeth believed in ghosts, and at around that time she was reporting to me many completely bizarre incidents that had been happening in her Santa Fe house. That included waking up to find her bedroom door unlocked, when she had locked it before going to sleep. She lived alone at that time, except for a dog and cat. And then there were incidents of lights coming on that she had turned off, especially in her garage.

She encouraged me in the belief that indeed something paranormal probably did happen to my missing trousers.

IV. Gary and Paul – At Work and At Play

Gary Schwartz, who had been experimenting with contacting specific spirit entities using sensitive measuring equipment and computer software, came with his wife, Rhonda, to see a work-in-progress version of *The Life After Death Project*. The announcement in the August, 2011 press release for the Canyon Moon Theater in the Village of Oak Creek, Arizona, was as follows:

Vision quests. Resurrections. Aliens. Miracles. The extraordinary meets the ordinary and takes it by storm. Catch the unforgettable classic films of Paul Davids – and the first-ever sneak preview of Paul Davids' latest film *The Life After Death Project* – at Canyon Moon Theatre this August 26 to 28!

Along with this exciting presentation of cinematic masterpieces comes the unique opportunity to see another kind of masterpiece – the artwork of Paul Davids.

Paul Davids is an award-winning writer of films and novels. Often collaborating with his wife, Hollace Davids, he has written and directed multiple films, as well as writing episodes for the television series *The Transformers* and a spin-off *Star Wars* book series. Notable Paul Davids films include *Starry Night*, released in 2001, as well as *Roswell*, the Golden Globe-nominated Showtime film, and the controversial feature documentary *Timothy Leary's Dead*.

See a work-in-progress: *The Life After Death Project* (August 27, 2:30 p.m). After the death of famous science fiction writer, editor and collector Forrest J Ackerman, his friends began to receive what seemed to be mysterious, personal messages from him from "The Other Side." A scientific investigation of the evidence led to a full-scale inquiry into the question of afterlife. The

resulting feature documentary promises to be thought-provoking on the same scale as *What the Bleep Do We Know*.

That weekend in Sedona, synchronicities started pouring into the lives of Gary and Rhonda Schwartz like beer from a pitcher at a college reunion. The name of the production company that I own with my wife is Yellow Hat Productions, Inc., and suddenly they started seeing yellow hats here, there and everywhere – and they took photos of them.

After the film screening, we stood outside the theater discussing synchronicities Gary had experienced involving gorillas. I brought up Forry Ackerman's love of *King Kong*, and at that very moment, a woman whom none of us knew, who had seen some of my films at the festival, approached us with a book to gift me called *The Invisible Gorilla*.

The day following the film screening we decided to have lunch at the Enchantment Resort. You park your car in their lot and then an employee drives you from the lot up to the restaurant in a cart. The fellow driving us up in the car was named Cody. Rhonda and I noted the synchronicity immediately. Rhonda and I had first met in the mid-1990s at a Mars research conference in Cody, Wyoming.

That night there was another name synchronicity. We were waited on at dinner at the Hilton Hotel at the Village of Oak Creek by a waiter named Forrest.

One of the suggestions offered by someone in the audience at the work-in-progress screening was that the film should include much more about the cutting-edge work of Dr. Gary Schwartz. After hearing that plea and the reasons for it, I did a video interview of Gary at the suite of the Enchantment Resort in Boynton Canyon, Sedona, where Gary and Rhonda were staying. Then I scheduled a trip back to Tucson, Arizona, to film Gary in his laboratory and have him explain to me how he made sensitive measurements that scientifically provided evidence favoring actual spirit communication.

V. In Walks Forry

From there, it was like a snowball rolling downhill, gaining momentum and size, as the Paul Davids/Gary Schwartz connection became solidified. The weekend with me in Sedona inspired Gary to take the step of inviting the spirits with whom he was attempting communication to include Forry Ackerman in their circle of afterlife correspondents.

I have no other expression for what happened next other than, as far as Dr. Gary Schwartz was concerned, it "blew his socks off!" He tentatively concluded that he was beginning to experience direct communication with Forrest J Ackerman in his laboratory.

This was about a week after our time together in Sedona at the festival of my films. I had gone from Sedona, Arizona, back up to Big Bear Lake to continue editing, now that I had notes from the work-in-progress screening.

Gary had begun informally attempting communication with Forrest J Ackerman using sensitive measuring devices that could track very subtle changes in radiation and light.

Gary informed me that he had been receiving positive results. He emailed to me some video he had filmed in his lab showing how the computer recorded on-screen responses on a bar graph. These responses were direct replies to questions he asked a group of specific spirits, or as Gary sometimes calls them: Departed Hypothesized Co-Investigators (DHCI). He also referred to that group of spirits as his Sacred Promise Team.

In fact, Gary was so excited about what happened on his first attempt, that he wrote an email to Jerry Cohen, the CEO of Canyon Ranch (where he sometimes lectures), and he copied Carrie Kennedy of Canyon Ranch on it and me as well. This was his email:

Dear Jerry and Carrie,

It is 3 am in the morning and I just completed two unanticipated recording sessions with a new member of our Sacred Promise Team. His name is Forrest J Ackerman, a giant in the sci-fi film genre. You can read about Forrest on Wikipedia.

I learned about Forrest through Paul Davids, a distinguished filmmaker of controversial films. His films range from *Jesus in India*, through *The Sci-Fi Boys* to *Roswell*. You can also read about Paul on Wikipedia.

His new film is called *The Life After Death Project*, which is how I came to meet him. Both Rhonda and I were interviewed for his documentary.

The film features Paul's journey of apparent after-death communications and related phenomena from Forrest. A preview of the film was presented this past weekend in Sedona as part of a Paul Davids film festival at the Canyon Moon Theater. Paul invited us to be present at the preview. Paul's wife, Hollace, is a Senior VP at Universal Pictures (NBCUniversal).

Following a series of extraordinary synchronicities, it came to me that it

might be wise (and responsible) to determine if Forrest could learn to use our evolving Spirit Verifier Technology.

I did not plan to run an actual test tonight. However, I had a crazy recurrent dream about Paul and Forrest and something which connected them to me. I finally got out of bed, went to the bathroom, got back into bed, and then felt I should get up and see if my intuitions were correct.

I went into my study and was about to start the audiovideo recording when a huge anomaly appeared on the screen! Amazed by the timing, I conducted "an interview" with Harry and others on the team, and then moved to Forrest. What unfolded was highly evidential and replicated. I saved the raw data plus the audiovideo.

I then sensed I should start a second audiovideo recording. As soon as I did, a second huge anomaly appeared on the screen!

I conducted a second "interview" with Forrest and the team.

What unfolded was breathtaking.

I have made flash movies of the two recordings and will email them to Paul for his inspection.

IF this is really Forrest, and IF this continues to replicate, it will take the work a great step forward. (As you recall, I consider "IF" to be my middle name!)

Rhonda just awoke, and I am going to show her the recordings.

Life is interesting.

Blessings, Gary

Gary E. Schwartz, Ph.D.

Professor of Psychology, Medicine, Neurology, Psychiatry and Surgery

Director, Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health

The University of Arizona

There was a confidentiality note at the end of the email, which has been waived by recipients for the purpose of including it in this book.

Gary did email me those audiovideo files. Some images of the files appear in Chapter 23, written by Gary, in which he provides his own detailed explanations.

I had never heard Gary as excited as his response to the unanticipated results of that purely informal experimentation. Gary assured me that his data clearly demonstrated real time computer data responses to his requests to the

spirits with whom he had been recording communication. For instance, he informed me that he had received a positive response to his request that the late Forrest J Ackerman be included in their "Afterlife Communication Group" (his Sacred Promise Team) – and he said that he had received confirmation that Forrest had been awaiting permission to communicate using the gamma radiation detection equipment.

While still up at our home in Big Bear Lake, on my computer screen, I observed not only the astonishing bar graph results Gary had recorded in real-time, but there was another phenomenon that was not present for Gary when he recorded it.

I was seeing geometric shapes, such as large red squares and rectangles, pop up on the screen and cover the data at the exact moments significant results were being reported or significant words were being stated.

Examples of what Paul's computer did with the data Gary sent Paul. At key moments the data could not be seen. Instead there were geometric shapes taking over the computer screen, such as red rectangles.

Some of Gary's data turned into a white square with a red border.

At his end, Gary saw no red geometric shapes, but at my end, it was unmistakable. I photographed my computer monitors to be certain that I would have a record of it.

The red square kept changing its geometric shape, getting larger and then becoming a white box with red border, then entirely a white box, always at key moments in Gary's questioning of the spirits.

When Gary sent me these files, I had been working on editing a sequence with Mark Macy, an author who has spent half a lifetime studying what is known as Instrumental Trans-Communication (ITC). This refers to the phenomena of spirits apparently contacting us using our own technological instrumentation. Much of this instrumentation, from tape recorders to video cameras, became available to consumers only in relatively recent times. Thomas Edison was probably the first to speculate on such possibilities, and by the late 1950's, a great deal of experimentation was underway involving Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP), which is considered one category of Instrumental Trans-Communication.

I had been warned by the cameraman that the Mark Macy interview had many visual glitches in it, which the cameraman assumed may have been due to camera overheating.

However, I noticed that the glitches occurred with both of the cameras that we were using during the two-camera filming session. The same cameras had been used for other interviews that day, without the appearance of glitches. Those glitches distorted Mark Macy's face into a series of weird and sometimes horrific facial features.

Although I am familiar both with "glitch art" (made from digital video glitches) and the fact that digital signals sometimes break up in unpredictable ways, I felt that this may not have been accidental. That's because of the use of two cameras simultaneously, with the same types of glitches occurring with both cameras, and also one had to consider the subject Mark Macy was addressing at the time. He was discussing the fact that spirits can communicate with us through our technological equipment by interfering with the electromagnetic field that surrounds the equipment.

I decided I wanted to film the computer monitors at that moment for two purposes: (a) to show the two-camera glitch results with Mark Macy side by side, and (b) to show the anomalous red geometric shapes in the computer "spirit communication" audio-visuals Gary Schwartz had sent me.

When I tried to film, first the computer began making a very loud noise I have never heard before, a somewhat frightening loud blast – and then my video camera froze. I was unable to record or do anything with it although the battery was fine.

I finally managed to record a little of the computer that was making the weird sounds – and then the camera froze completely and refused to respond to any of the control buttons.

The fact that camera and computer broke down simultaneously was especially odd, because the camera and computer are separate electrical systems, not connected in any way. Also, the camera battery still had power. To me this suggested the possible interference by a spirit presence, which was exactly what Mark Macy had been talking about in his interview that I had been editing – a spirit manipulation of electromagnetic fields. The sensation took me back to the day we had experienced such strange electromagnetic anomalies with the mask from Zimbabwe.

I successfully took still photos of the odd red squares, but I was very worried about the total computer failure. I went to a Mac "Genius Bar" back in Los Angeles and was informed the computer motherboard would have to be replaced.

Of course, motherboards sometimes fail on their own. However, I was suspicious because of the odd timing: its failure at the same time the camera failed, moments after I had been seeing odd red and white geometric shapes on the computer monitor in Gary's spirit communication files. It was very strange that the camera began to function again within an hour of this incident, without requiring repair or a new battery, and it did not fail again.

It will not be clear immediately why I am bringing up one other point about what was occurring to me while at Big Bear Lake, but the significance will become apparent in a few pages. Ever since discovering the EVP of the word "Lenore" in my video footage of the Zimbabwe mask in Santa Fe, I was intensely involved with reading the writings of and various biographies of Edgar Allan Poe. Hearing the word "Lenore" had set me on that path.

In my readings, I began to make a deep inquiry about the relationship between young Edgar and his foster father, John Allan. It was one of the most fascinating aspects of Edgar's life. It baffled and disturbed me that John Allan, though he came into a fortune through inheritance, never formally adopted Edgar Poe whom he and his wife had raised from age three. John Allan eventually cut Edgar off from funding and left him out of the will. In fact, John Allan was perhaps the richest man in the State of Virginia, and he left his foster son, Edgar

Allan Poe, in a state of abject poverty.

Their estrangement began in Edgar's college years. I tried to grasp why Edgar would have risked his relationship with his wealthy foster father through his own self-destructive, unwelcome actions. Poe had it made, and he threw it all away, exchanging the patrician lifestyle in which he was raised for a life of extreme poverty. Poe wrote about this sort of psychological tendency for self-destruction in his story "The Imp of The Perverse." All of this was intensely on my mind that week when the name of Poe's foster father appeared in a strange psychic reading that Gary Schwartz delivered to me over the phone. More about that soon…

VI. My Wife's Whale

My wife, Hollace, became deeply drawn into all of this with an incident of a missing small figurine of a white whale she had purchased in Big Bear Lake. Up to that point, Hollace had been part of these events by witnessing the Huichol mask popping off the wall and by bringing the bottle of wine up to Big Bear Lake – wine that matched the type served at Sean Fernald's wedding and the year of that wedding. She had fully supported my investigations with scientists about the ink obliteration, and she had closely followed with interest and great curiosity the gradual expansion of my list of experiences. The incident of the white whale figurine intensified once again her direct involvement and caused her dismay and concern.

In September, 2011, the day before our planned departure from Big Bear Lake during one of our many trips there, Hollace and I attended a local swap meet. Hollace hadn't told me what her purchases were, but she had placed them in a bag in the back of her car and left the bag there. I was unaware of it. When it was time to go back to Los Angeles and pack up the car, she gave me her car keys, and at her request I took her suitcases outside the house to put in her car.

That's when I noticed the paper bag from the swap meet. I called out to her and asked her what she wanted to do with the swap meet bag. She told me that the conch shell would stay in Big Bear, but the white whale should stay in the car to go back to Los Angeles.

I said, "What white whale?"

She shouted from the porch, "The white whale in the bag – the sculpture I bought for five dollars."

I shouted back: "There's no white whale. No sculpture. There's only a conch shell."

“WHAT?!” she yelled. “Of course there’s a whale. That’s impossible.”

She came down from the porch and looked in the bag herself. There was no whale.

“What did you do with it?” she asked me.

“I didn’t do anything with it,” I replied, “I never saw it. What did it look like?”

She explained that she knew it was in the bag, that she distinctly remembered putting it in there with the conch shell she had bought. It hadn’t been anywhere else except the back of the car. And the car had been locked and parked in the Big Bear house driveway since the moment we got to the house after the swap meet.

The white whale never showed up again. It vanished off the face of the earth, as far as we both can tell.

Even though it was an item that had only cost five dollars – a totally insignificant monetary value – the fact that the whale vanished became a huge issue as we attempted to grapple with its significance philosophically, psychologically and emotionally.

I asked myself many times: what could be the significance of the white whale, if this was another occurrence in the chain of apparently Forry-related incidents? It somehow seemed obvious to me, intuitively. White whales instantly remind everyone of *Moby Dick*, and Forry’s dear friend Ray Bradbury had written the screenplay for the film of *Moby Dick*, on which he had shared screenplay writing credit with John Huston. (Ray Bradbury had been furious over John Huston getting his name on the film as screenwriter, too, since Ray Bradbury considered Huston’s contribution to the script nil although Huston had directed.) The poster of the movie of *Moby Dick* hangs in Joe Moe’s apartment. In fact, when I interviewed Joe Moe for *The Life After Death Project*, you can clearly see the *Moby Dick* poster in the background. On that poster, Ray Bradbury had scratched off John Huston’s name as co-screenwriter.

(Incidentally, I did personally know John Huston, having worked for five years for his Hollywood agent, Paul Kohner. I had visited John Huston several times in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, where he had lived in the Elizabeth Taylor/Richard Burton home known as Casa Kimberly. I had brought him scripts and frozen American steaks from Mr. Kohner, and I had stayed to enjoy the steaks, the parties, the boating, the snorkeling and the backgammon gambling with the accompanying scent of Mr. Huston’s cigars. John Huston, whose achievements in cinema make him one of the immortal, great masters (and earned him a commemorative U.S. stamp), had passed away almost twenty-five

years before our white whale incident.

One can reasonably ask if it is reading too much into the missing whale to imply that the disappearance was an intentional message from Forrest J Ackerman involving Ray Bradbury. Nevertheless, I note that Ray Bradbury's health took a turn for the worse around that time in September of 2011, and he passed away about nine months later in 2012 at age 91, just one year shy of Forry's age at death.

VII. No Hoo-Ray from Ray Bradbury

At the time it happened, thinking about the whale incident, I decided I should try to make an effort to tell Ray Bradbury about what had been happening to me and other friends of Forry ever since the tribute for Forry at the Egyptian Theater in March, 2009. Ray Bradbury had been one of the speakers at that tribute. Although Ray Bradbury had been helpful with my film, *The Sci-Fi Boys*, and he had signed a release so I could use interview footage of him, I found it impossible to get a response from him in my request for an appointment.

His declining health was probably the main reason. He was afflicted with diabetes, and I heard that he was not taking care of himself. He was continuing to drink alcohol and eat sweets and ignore a medically-advised diet. Was that a death wish, or was it simply an unwillingness to compromise any of the pleasures in life that he had grown to love?

I did not know at that time that Ray Bradbury was a diehard skeptic about all things paranormal or other-worldly. In that respect, he was quite like his friend Forrest J Ackerman had been in life.

For instance, he was an inflexible denier of the reality of UFOs or flying saucers. The day Ray Harryhausen got his star on Hollywood Boulevard, both Ray Bradbury and Forry were there, and I had been invited to join them at a luncheon afterwards. However, Forry took ill and needed to depart before lunch, and I ended up seated next to Ray Bradbury. When it came up in conversation that I had been executive producer and co-writer of Showtime's *Roswell,* he became very critical and snappy. He told me he didn't approve of the film because it supported the position that the Roswell Incident really happened as legend has it – that it was the crash of an alien flying saucer. The fact is, it is a very complex case, and I had heard from many first hand witnesses, and also heard personally from astronauts Gordon Cooper and Edgar Mitchell (who walked on the moon) – both told me first-hand of their certainty that an alien spaceship did crash in Roswell in 1947. They both went public with those

beliefs. However, Ray Bradbury was irritated with me for making a film that he felt spread a false rumor. I said, “With all due respect, Mr. Bradbury, how can you be so sure it never happened?” He replied, “Because they wouldn’t have kept it a secret from me. I’m Ray Bradbury.”

I was taken aback. He felt that as the author of fictional works such as *It Came From Outer Space* and *The Martian Chronicles*, that even if the information were classified, government insiders would tip him off that alien life had been confirmed.

Unlike my rendezvous with author Richard Matheson, any attempt on my part to bring to him the evidence about Forry’s afterlife communications would not have been received with good will. In fact, at one point, a friend of mine and Forry’s named Steve Vertlieb did arrange to see Ray Bradbury. I implored him to tell Mr. Bradbury what had been happening and why I wanted to see him.

Steve later reported to me that he had brought it up, letting Ray Bradbury know that I was convinced Forry had dropped me a line after he died. Ray Bradbury had told Steve curtly and somewhat rudely, “Well, tell him he’s wrong!” Those five words had been both the beginning and end of that conversation. To my extreme disappointment, he wanted to hear no more.

I feel that closed-mindedness to that extent is tragic. Gary Schwartz deals with this phenomenon at length in his chapters later in this book. Gary refers to that type of skepticism as a Type II Skeptic – the skeptic who has no interest in examining evidence, hearing data, considering hypotheses involving life after death. His mind is made up, and he is not a genuine skeptic at all.

There’s an expression: “I’m from Missouri, show me.”

That’s a Type I Skeptic. He is willing to be shown.

The Type II Skeptic says: “I’m from Missouri, leave me alone and get the hell out of here!”

Actually, Ray Bradbury was a skeptic from Waukegan, Illinois.

VIII. Lisa Marie, Psychic

Literally a day after the white whale went missing, I received a phone call from Gary Schwartz while I was driving down the mountainside from Big Bear Lake back to the city. Hollace and I had driven two separate cars on that trip, and she was already back in Los Angeles.

Gary told me that he had a friend named Lisa Marie in a northeastern state who was a very effective psychic. Lisa Marie had been responsible, said Gary,

for conveying to him many afterlife communications from Gary's mentor in this research, author Susy Smith.

Gary had proposed to Lisa Marie the following: would she be so kind as to summon the spirit of Susy Smith in the Hereafter and have Susy get in touch with someone Gary and his friend Paul were interested in, a deceased man named Forrest? First names only were used. The question was, did Forrest have any message for Paul he could send through Susy and Lisa Marie?

Days later, Gary had received back from Lisa Marie a message consisting of the following very briefly stated clues and information. To Gary, it seemed like a complete miss. He could not associate any of these things with Forrest J Ackerman, and he asked me whether I could. Remarkably, in Lisa Marie's communication, I found a whole array of precise, seemingly targeted clues and messages that Gary could not possibly have perceived. Here was Gary Schwartz' explanation of the psychic communication followed by Lisa Marie's 13 items.

Dear Paul,

Below are the actual words from Lisa Marie, the medium.
Please explain your reaction to each sentence.

As we discussed, the deceased (i.e., spirit people) typically provide five categories of information:

1. Identifying information (e.g., how they look, causes of death, historical facts, etc.).

2. After Death Communication (e.g., physical anomalies, strange animal appearances, EVPs, dreams, etc.)

3. Present day "Watching Over" informing (i.e., events and thoughts that are occurring in your present life)

4. Future Events (e.g., premonitions, warnings, foreseeing)

5. Personal feelings (e.g., love, asking forgiveness, etc.).

Please remember, all the medium could do during her meditation was catch "flashes of information."

No dialogue, not a reading….and she has NO WAY OF KNOWING

whether a given piece of information applies to which (if any) of the five categories above.

I look forward to reading your integration of the flashes below…. blessings, Gary

***** MEDIUM'S FLASHES OF INFORMATION *****

Messages from Forrest for Paul:

1. heard the word Cambridge

2. geometric shapes triangles *etc.*

3. heard the words infrared and x-ray

4. patterns on the screen are a 'calling card'

5. dogs as amplifiers of energy

6. plants in a greenhouse – 'botany'

7. minerals – periodic table of elements – symbols

8. something about Germany – Hamburg

9. something about a name that starts with Rosen – a 'Doctor Rose,' Rosengarten, Rosenburg….etc.

10. Heard the name 'Allen'

11. A 'cuckoo clock'

12. electromagnetic field – degaussing?

13. Nicola Tesla

14. dolphins

15. echolocation

16. sonogram

MY COMMENTS ON THE COMMUNICATION FROM LISA MARIE

1. Cambridge

Hollace and I met on a street corner in Cambridge, Massachusetts by chance, and we have been married now for more than 40 years. The word Cambridge immediately tips me off that this message from Forrest is about me and about Hollace.

2. Geometric shapes, triangles *etc.*

This could refer to the geometric shapes of the red square anomalies that appeared on my computer monitor when Gary Schwartz sent me the computer data on his communications with Forry's spirit. The square changed size and appearance several times during the video of Gary Schwartz' graphs, but there was no triangle.

3. Heard the words infrared and x-ray

I had speculated in the week before receiving this message as to whether unseen spirits could be seen at the infrared end of the spectrum. But the word 'red' is also relevant because of the strange red square and red rectangle anomalies that had been appearing on the computer screen for me related to the Schwartz graphs of afterlife communication.

X-Ray –- within about nine hours of getting this message I was in a hospital emergency room getting an x-ray of my ankle. Thus, this could have been an impending future event reference.

4. Patterns on the screen are a 'calling card'

This was a huge bull's eye. The recent work with Gary had been all about the patterns on the computer screen and evaluating the extent to which they are a calling card from a team of spirits attempting communication with the physical world.

5. Dogs as amplifiers of energy

Forry and Wendayne owned a Chihuahua back in the 1980's. Her name was Bonnie Barker. They found her abandoned in a cemetery! Forry wrote a note to his biographer, Deborah Painter, years later when Bonnie Barker died. Forry was not a big fan of dogs, though, especially big dogs, having had a scary experience with a dog when he was a child.

6. Plants in a greenhouse – 'botany'

Hollace is intensely devoted to plants and gardens. She has wonderful gardens at our Los Angeles house, which was partially painted green. (Could this have meant a green house rather than a greenhouse?) It was not clear why this was mentioned – but when I had the accident nine hours after receiving the message, I fell face forward into a rose bush.

7. Minerals – periodic table of elements – symbols

This was a bull's eye. It seemed to be no stretch at all to take this as a reference to the obliterating ink on my document, and the search at two university chemistry laboratories about what the substance was. This was all about finding answers related to the periodic table of elements.

8. Something about Germany – Hamburg

Forry's wife was from Germany (she was born in Frankfurt). At the time of the reading, Silke Fernald was visiting Germany. She was in Frankfurt, not Hamburg. Forry's most admired director was the German director Fritz Lang who created one of Forry's favorite films, *Metropolis*.

9. Something about a name that starts with Rosen – a 'doctor Rose'… Rosengarten, Rosenburg….etc.

I puzzled over the fact that I could think of no "Doctor Rose." But then I realized that after receiving the prediction, I tripped over a railroad tie in our backyard garden and fell into plants, a rose bush, and ended up seeing a doctor in an emergency room and getting an x-ray right away. All of those elements show up in this message, which makes it seem like a premonition: x-ray, plants, rose, doctor…

10. Heard the name 'Allen'

As I explained previously, the name Allan was on my mind intensely for the days around the time of this psychic communication – I was reading deeply about John Allan, foster father of Edgar Allan Poe. Of course, that's spelled "Allan" and not "Allen," but the psychic heard this message, so she wouldn't have necessarily known how to spell that name.

11. A 'cuckoo clock'

The chiming of the unused, unwound antique clock was one of the anomalies filmed at the home of Dr. John Allison of the College of New Jersey. Though it wasn't literally a "cuckoo clock," it was totally reminiscent of that kind of clock – and the words 'cuckoo clock' are in quotes, which would imply "not exactly a cuckoo clock but sort of…" Also, at that time, the poster of key art we had made for *The Life After Death Project* (which had been displayed at the Canyon Moon theater when Gary was there) did have an antique clock in the art with a raven atop the clock.

12. Electromagnetic field – degaussing ?

The week before this psychic communication, I re-edited the Zimbabwe mask scene in the movie to make it really clear how the electromagnetic field was measured and the fact that it was measured in milligauss or one thousandth of a gauss. A gauss is a unit of magnetic field strength. Also, I had been dealing with anomalies at Big Bear in the editing room – the failure of the computer and camera and the glitches on the Mark Macy footage – that all suggested irregularities in the electromagnetic field.

This, like John Allan, the periodic table of the elements, patterns on the screen being a 'calling card' and x-ray, plants, rose, doctor, all turned out to be major themes of that week!

13. Nicola Tesla

One thinks of Tesla as a scientist who turned concepts of science fiction into science fact. Discoverer of A.C. current and holder of many patents on things that were once inconceivable, he represents in actuality what Forrest J Ackerman represented in terms of scholarship of science fiction literature: that the science fiction of yesterday becomes the science fact of tomorrow. However, I do not know of any direct interest by Forry in Tesla. This seemed like a miss… until a few years later, in 2014. That was the year Gallery Tesla, in Sedona,

began an ongoing exhibit of my art, which is (as of this writing) still part of the gallery (www.gallerytesla.com).

Also, during our séance at the Ackermansion in May, 2015, medium Susanne Wilson stated that Tesla had shown up. Therefore, a connection between Forry and Tesla (of which we were unaware) was suggested by that.

14 through 16: Dolphins – Echolocation – Sonogram

I will take all three of these together because they all turn our attention to the missing white whale sculpture. It had just disappeared the day before I received this psychic message. When you consider these three words together you must acknowledge: dolphins are another sea mammal of substantial intelligence, like whales, so the word dolphin immediately suggests whale.

Echolocation is how whales and dolphins navigate and communicate undersea. Sonogram, though usually referring to a medical test during pregnancy, is based on the principle of sound wave echoes, just like echolocation. I saw in these three words a reference to our missing white whale. And when I showed the list of words in the psychic message to Hollace, she very quickly said…"the missing whale?"

My conclusion is that there was a strong connection in this psychic communication to the key things that had been going on in my life and Hollace's life as we grappled with editing of *The Life After Death Project*.

It made me feel a bit like the character in The Truman Show – as though someone would have had to have not only been watching me and Hollace from behind our shoulders but seeing into our very minds to come up with this list. It also seemed highly unlikely that the list was random or coincidental, because too many of the items were spot-on, beginning with Cambridge, where Hollace and I met.

Like the name of the feature in Famous Monsters magazine – "You Axed for It!" – well, I had certainly "axed" for it. I had thought it would be a marvelous idea if Forry "dropped me a line" if it were possible to do so, after he passed. It turned out to be not one line, but years of them, showing me that the relationship had not ended with his death.

I didn't want it to stop. It was exhilarating, sort of addicting, always to be wondering what oddity would occur next. I kept inviting Forry to continue being a part of my life. And it certainly appears that he has obliged me.

For example, today as I write these words, it is September 3, 2015, six and a half years from the day of the ink obliteration. I spent the day today with two

of Forry's close friends and admirers. I was out in Westlake Village at the home of Fred Barton, known as "The Robot Man." Fred has spent a lifetime building perfect, life-size replicas of many of the major movie robots. These are precision instruments that function perfectly and sell for tens of thousands of dollars "to the men and women who have everything."

You Axed for It was one of Forry's puns that became a popular feature of Famous Monsters.

Forry Ackerman seated in the time machine from George Pal's 1960 cinematic masterpiece. Paul Davids acquired this photo at the Ackerman estate auction in May, 2009, about a month after the ink obliteration occurred.

Fred Barton has also built perfect replicas of George Pal's Time Machine from the 1960 film. Fred showed us a new time machine replica he was completing. The chair, with its bright red fabric, was stunning. Joining us, examining the time machine and all the robots, was Steve Vertleib, a scholar

with specialized knowledge of the composers who have written music scores for fantasy and science fiction films, including Bernard Hermann and Miklos Rozsa. Steve's brother Erwin was there, too. We spoke about our mutual friend, Forry, for hours – he was the focus of our afternoon.

As I was leaving, I wanted music, so I turned on the car stereo connected to my iPod, which had been set for the music of Bob Dylan. I had been listening to Dylan endlessly for days, songs like "Mr. Tambourine Man," "It Ain't Me, Babe" and "Blowin' in the Wind."

I had not touched the iPod setting and certainly had not changed it from Dylan. But it didn't play Dylan. It blasted out the music of *The Phantom of the Opera*. That was one of Forry's favorites. Forry always kept Lon Chaney in mind, the original phantom from the 1925 silent film.

I kept saying to myself again and again: "I did not touch that iPod." "I didn't touch it!" "How did this happen?" The iPod was in the glove compartment, which was closed. A stream of questions flooded my mind. "Did Forry do that?" "Was he saying hello again with the music of the Phantom?" "How did he do that?" "It is so amazing!" "How did he take personal control of my electronics?" "Does everyone on the Other Side gain the ability to interact with us in such precise ways?"

I have video footage (which is in *The Sci-Fi Boys*) of Forry telling an entire auditorium of onlookers that he wanted to star in a remake of *The Phantom of the Opera* and play the role of the Phantom, and that Oprah Winfrey should be the star who pulls off the mask and exposes the horror of the Phantom's ugliness. And Forry pulled off another of his puns. He said they should call that film *The Phantom of the Oprah*.

The following stream of thoughts kept flowing through my mind as I tried to confront this latest mystery. I thought: How could there be any question but that the change of music on the iPod, from Dylan to Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera*, was deliberate – a message, a signal, a hello from the Other Side? I later examined the iPod to see how difficult it was to change from Dylan to *The Phantom of the Opera*.

First, I could not even find *Phantom of the Opera* among the thousands of musical entries in the menu. Dylan is listed under the category of Artists. *The Phantom of the Opera* was in another category, under composers. It took work, ingenuity and knowledge of the organization of the music in the device to be able to change from one piece to another. This was no accident. However, my human mind cannot conceive of how it was done. The fact that it was done shows an extraordinary attentiveness and interest, on the part of Forry on the

Other Side, as to what was happening in my life that day. And I suppose this was because I had been assembled with two of his friends, thinking of him.

I ask the reader to go along with me as I begin to abandon talking about these things as theory and hypotheses and assert them as facts, given that the phenomena themselves are all certainly in the province of the Great Unknown. To me, the fact that these things happen, and happen repeatedly, demonstrates the extreme limitation of the human brain and human consciousness. They demonstrate that much greater forces than we can fathom are at work in our lives – or at least, in this case, in my life.

Now it is a week and a day later, and I have been listening to *The Phantom of the Opera* all week in my car. It is September 11, 2015 – always a somber day of the year. Today I wrote the sworn affidavit certifying that all the phenomena that has happened to me that I have written about in this book is true. I needed a notary. I won't take a guess of how many notaries there are in Los Angeles, but I chose one in Pasadena in a copy and printing shop near where my mother used to live. The notary's name, it turned out, was Denetia Arellanes, and when I handed her the statement explaining that I wanted it notarized as a jurat (meaning I was swearing to the contents of the document and not just as a validation of my signature), she glanced at it and said, "This is about Forrest J Ackerman?"

"Did you know Forrest J Ackerman?" I asked, very surprised.

"Yes, I did know him," she said.

Another synchronicity. The frequency of synchronicities in my life, always abundant, now seemed to be greatly accelerating.

It turned out that Denetia's husband, whom she referred to as R.J., had helped Forry move from his first Ackermansion on Sherbourne to the 18-room Ackermansion on Glendower. She said R.J. and a friend named Mark McGee had helped with the packing and transporting of Forry and Wendayne's massive number of boxes.

I was startled at hearing the name Mark McGee. Did she still know Mark McGee, I asked her? The answer was yes. I asked if she knew his email address, and she explained Mark McGee had never really integrated himself into the digital age – did not even have a cell phone let alone email.

I recalled who Mark McGee was from when I was a young teenager making *Siegfried Saves Metropolis* to enter in the *Famous Monsters* amateur film contest. In those days, he was another young teenager whose name kept showing up in *Famous Monsters* as an enthusiast and young collector who made amateur monster films. And I recalled his name from approximately fifty years ago, but I

do not believe I ever met him.

I would like some superstar skeptic to compute the statistical odds for me to determine the likelihood that this would happen when I set out to look for a notary to take my oath. How many millions of people are there in Los Angeles? How many personally knew Forry and helped him move?

After Denetia finished telling me about her trips to the Ackermansion, and after she reflected on the tragedy of Wendayne's paralysis during her final years, and how the big Ackermansion just got to be too much for Forry as he approached his nineties… after hearing all that from her, I said to Denetia, "It looks like we're family now."

I paid her ten dollars and departed.

12. THE MEDIUM HAS A MESSAGE

I. My Experiences with Psychics and Mediums

I explained earlier how one psychic I met by chance (Molly) gave an accurate prediction about how I would soon win "a round award," and the curious claim that someone deceased named George, a very jolly man who always had a twinkle in his eye, would help me win it.

Apart from the experience with that psychic, who entered my life by an "accident" rather than by my seeking her out, I cannot recall any other time when I sought a spiritual reading from anyone, until I became involved with Dr. Gary Schwartz and *The Life After Death Project*.

For my wife, it has been another story. She has had occasional spiritual readings from psychics for decades, and though she retains a certain cautious skepticism, she has found some of them revealed extraordinary insight. I'll never forget her telling me about a psychic called Potts in England who predicted for my wife that our then-single daughter would discover the man she would marry that year, and that it was already someone she knew. That came to pass.

There was one other interlude in my life involving psychic phenomena. It was when I was a segment coordinator for the F. Lee Bailey TV show called *Lie Detector*, when the subject of one of my segments was Dorothy Allison of New Jersey. Dorothy Allison was a psychic detective, who was noted for having assisted police in solving many crimes. An impressive book had been published about her. She had a flurry of cases to point to as examples of her successes in using her psychic abilities to help the police solve crimes.

The TV segment I coordinated for F. Lee Bailey and polygrapher Edward Gelb (who had been President of the American Polygraph Association) was about a missing fourteen year old girl. The police had not accomplished anything on the case, but when she was consulted, Dorothy Allison received mental images of many clues very quickly. She was convinced the girl had been murdered. She smelled oil. She saw two bridges, one of which was for

pedestrians, the other for vehicles. She saw twin church steeples. She saw marshy land. And she saw the letters “MAR,” which she was convinced was very significant.

The girl’s father searched for a location that could match Dorothy’s information. Eventually, he located a place that matched it perfectly. MAR was written in large red letters as graffiti. The bridges were there and so were the church steeples. The land was marshy and he saw a deep pit that had old oil drums. Later some boys playing nearby discovered the decaying body of his daughter in one of the oil drums.

Generally, the act of touching clothing or other articles owned by deceased individuals (usually murder victims) assisted Dorothy Allison in coming up with highly relevant facts. In the MAR case, she felt the murder victim was putting the images of the scene into her mind.

She had many testimonials from various police departments stating her information had helped them solve crimes.

I never had a philosophical framework for dealing with her purported accuracy, since at that time I was rather a skeptic. However, I certainly could not dismiss her. Further, she passed our lie detector test, which was nationally televised. The test was to determine if she had based her discovery on oral or written information that had been provided to her. Was her psychic claim a hoax? The polygraph determined it was not.

In retrospect, I look back at the TV segment I worked on in 1983, and I feel it should have opened my mind then and there to pursue these realities: mediumship, information obtained by psychic means. However, it did not.

Later, in the course of making *The Life After Death Project*, I met Marisa Ryan, another psychic detective who claimed to have been visited by a murder victim who provided critical information about who murdered her and how. Her claims were very similar to those of Dorothy Allison.

I was never able to undertake research to confirm all the various claims I heard from Dorothy Allison and Marissa Ryan, but when it came to the Forrest J Ackerman case, I had first-hand experiences with psychics who delivered far more than I ever could have expected. For me, the constant and inflexible naysaying of the skeptical community, and the outright dismissal of what had become virtually certain to me, was very difficult to accept.

II. Mediums: Finding “The Real Thing”

One of the most virulent attacks on my documentary came from a skeptic who claimed that I had biased the psychic readings related to Forry. He claimed, without having any evidence for his claim, that I had cherry-picked the hits and ignored the misses. The allegations concluded with the charge I am “obviously biased” toward interpreting all of the evidence that comes my way, and that I cannot possibly be objective about mediums.

I strenuously disagree.

I had never thought of involving mediums in the Ackerman research until both Dr. Gary Schwartz and also Anne and Whitley Strieber suggested it.

The Striebers came first, when they informed me about the Australian medium named Glennys MacKay, whom Whitley described as having astounded him with accuracy about things she could not possibly have known in any conventional way. In fact, he further stated she couldn’t possibly have pulled some of these things out of his conscious mind, because the thoughts were not even in his conscious mind. They were buried under many years of forgotten people and incidents.

In *The Life After Death Project*, Whitley tells how Glennys proved she could actually see spirits of the dead surrounding living persons. She proceeded to name and describe a violinist in a tuxedo who played classical music whose spirit was nearby Whitley at that moment. She said his name was Milton. Whitley was in shock to be reminded of the violinist in Texas named Milton who played in an orchestra wearing a tuxedo, who had been the inspiration for his love of classical music. This was a man he had not thought of in decades.

When Glennys visited Los Angeles, I introduced her to the mystery of the inkblot obliteration, and she began to describe various things about the spirit of the man responsible. She talked about his love of jokes and pranks and games, and she said he was enjoying having a game with me. There were some misses among her descriptive comments, and one of her remarks I incorrectly passed off as having no relevance. She asked about a woman named Daisy in the life of this man, and she said she was somehow important in this. I knew of no Daisy in connection with Forry.

However, when I invited Joe Moe to join me in Santa Fe for a week, to assist me in editing the copious amount of material I filmed in 2009, when he heard the name Daisy his face lit up with astonishment. He explained that Daisy was Forry’s housekeeper from El Salvador who lived at the Ackermansion for many years.

Here’s the back story as to why Daisy was relevant. There came a time when Joe wanted the opportunity to live and work at the Ackermansion as

Forry's assistant, to help him with the organization and orderly curating of his enormous collection of movie and literary memorabilia. Forry had explained to Joe that very regretfully there was no room in the Ackermansion that could accommodate him. However, within a day or two of that decision, which would have closed the door on the unique relationship between Forry and Joe Moe that later developed, Daisy gave notice. She informed Forry that she was returning to El Salvador. That timing was perfect for Joe. It opened up a room and provided Joe the opportunity he needed. He soon moved in and began his lengthy association as Forry's right-hand man, and eventually, as his caretaker and care-giver.

Glennys certainly didn't pull the name Daisy out of my consciousness, because it wasn't there. And of course, Glennys had never given any details about Daisy or why she was important – it was all a large blank filled in only by her awareness that something about a woman named Daisy had significance.

Later, there was some dispute about Daisy among some other friends of Forry, who claimed that her name was actually Susie, and that Joe Moe got it wrong. And therefore Glennys MacKay would have gotten it wrong, too. However, in issues of *Famous Monsters*, I found references Forry made to his housekeeper – one time he called her Susie and another time he referred to her as Daisy. So was Daisy Susie's nickname? Or the other way around?

In any event, I didn't have a clue about this, so it was clear that Glennys had not brought this up because of anything I said or did.

III. Enter Dr. Schwartz

The first medium Gary Schwartz involved in this case was Catherine Yunt, who, like Gary, lived in Tucson, and who had participated in some of his University studies of mediums. The second psychic he enlisted, more than a year later, was the Israeli psychic, Orit Ish Yemeni Tomer. Her participation had to await her visit to the United States from Tel Aviv.

Both were carefully kept in the dark. They didn't know who I was and were not told my name. I was simply the "man with the video camera" who wanted to hear from a deceased friend.

In the case of Catherine, at her request, she was given the first name of my friend, and she quickly remarked that my problem was that "I couldn't see the Forrest for the trees," a play on words which became the theme of much of her reading. As you know from Jack Kelleher's chapter, he also thought of not seeing "the Forrest for the trees." It's a fairly well known and often-used

expression, so that in itself doesn't "light any torches" for us. However, with Catherine, it was only the beginning of a reading that became so specific in so many ways it certainly quickened my heartbeat.

I would like to point out that Catherine and Orit each brought out somewhat different aspects that clearly related to Forry Ackerman's life and personality. Orit's details about his life were more specific, whereas Catherine was able to characterize his unique sense of humor, some of his gestures, and she emphasized his love of word play. This was remarkable, because it was of singular importance for understanding Forry and his style. She picked up something about "the Congo" – very curious when dealing with a man who nurtured as one of his ultimate fictional passions a love affair with *King Kong*. Kong sounds like Congo. Kong lived in an environment (Skull Island) similar to the Congo. To pull the word Congo "out of the ether" was so improbable and yet so relevant, we saw doors opening with Catherine for many meaningful moments.

She discussed a controversy involving Forry's middle name, and yes, there was such a controversy.

I was taken with her vision of a giraffe, and then her stated uncertainty as to whether it was actually a giraffe, but it was an animal with a very long neck that made her think of a giraffe.

Prominent among Forry's collection of movie memorabilia was the actual brontosaurus model used in the original *King Kong* – a very long-necked dinosaur. It was one of his priceless, historic cinematic treasures.

She also mentioned the Academy Awards in connection with this man, and though he never won an Academy Award, he did spend one night guarding the trophies, the Oscars, for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. It was a night dear to his heart, and he had shared the story with many. If I remember correctly, it was when the 1939 film *Gone With the Wind* swept the Oscars.

There were three things that came out in Catherine's reading that I somewhat dismissed at the time and did not include in the film. The first was the fact that she began with comments about a Frenchman. She kept hearing the word "baguette." That word reminds me of "blague," which means joke, trick, or blunder. I found out about three years later, that Forry's wife had a French lover named Paul who was the bane of Forry's existence. This Frenchman, Paul, kept popping up in Forry's life like some kind of bad joke, and Paul would run off with Forry's wife for a few days or a week and then she would return to her life with him as though nothing had happened. This affair was never a secret from

Forry.

In fact, you will find earlier in this book Forry's personal ruminations on life after death and why it does not exist, and there he mentions his wife's lover, Paul. If there were an afterlife, Forry mused, would Forry's deceased wife, Wendayne, already be cavorting with her lover Paul over there? And how would Paul juggle that relationship with his previous three wives? In other words, the existence of this French lover of Forry's wife figured into his very concerns about why an afterlife would be unthinkable and unworkable. Was it so off-base, then, that Catherine began by focusing on a Frenchman?

Catherine also wanted to know if my late friend's hair had ever been singed by fire. That made no sense to me. However, later we recalled that Michael Jackson's hair had been singed by fire, and that Forrest J Ackerman had appeared in Michael Jackson's music video, *Thriller*, directed by Forry's close friend John Landis. So the "singed by fire" observation ties together Forry and Michael Jackson and *Thriller*, which was about vampires and the "undead," a favorite topic for Forry in fiction.

There is another part of Catherine's reading where she is hearing the sound "EEEEE." She isn't sure of the context. As we know, Forry often went by "4E." As Dr. John Allison mentions toward the end of his chapter, when he discusses the sound his Furby made, he described it as "FOUR-EEEEEE."

Again, these are not conclusive, however certainly some of the information is accurate enough and specific enough to suggest that the reading cannot be dismissed as some sort of groundless guess-work.

Catherine also identified many of Forry's typical gestures. She asked if he frequently raised his eyebrows as a response. That was true. At one point, when asked what Forry thought of Joe's music (meaning Joe Moe), she abruptly put her fingers in her ears. It was such a revealing "Forry response." Joe prides himself in his singing, and Joe's father was a famous Hawaiian singer. But would Forry ever have put his fingers in his ears while Joe crooned? Not outside the realm of possibility!

Over the following years, I sought out Catherine for readings about other people, and each time there were things of relevance that she saw or heard in her mind's eye and ear. The unforgettable incident was this: I sought a reading about producer George Pal without giving away his name. Later it became clear she had never heard of George Pal. When I pronounced his name at the end of the reading, she thought he was George Powell.

Psychic medium Catherine Yunt of Tucson had a lengthy career as a high school math teacher. She finds no inconsistency between the precision of mathematics and her role as a psychic medium. Recently she was involved with the TV show: In Deep Shift.

I showed her George Pal's photo at the beginning to get the reading started – clearly not a man she had ever seen, not someone she could recognize.

In the reading, she brought out his involvement in motion picture special effects, Yes, he was a pioneer in that field, with his many films such as *War of The Worlds, When Worlds Collide, The Conquest of Space, The Time Machine, Destination Moon, Houdini, The Seven Faces of Dr. Lao, The Wonderful World of The Brothers Grimm,* and *Tom Thumb*.

She mentioned Walt Disney in connection with that reading. She said later that she almost withheld that information, because it seemed so outrageous to suggest that Walt Disney was there. However, it was not outrageous. The two men were colleagues and friends who had a great deal of mutual respect. They settled between them the issue of who would make *The Time Machine* and who would make *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, since both had an interest in each story.

George Pal (left) with Walt Disney (center) and Walter Lantz (creator of Woody Woodpecker).

Unknown to anyone but me, I had visited George Pal's grave in Los Angeles the day before I traveled to see Catherine for that particular reading. Walking up to his grave, I had affectionately sung to him the tune "Talented Shoes" from his film *Tom Thumb*.

At the end of that reading I had asked Catherine if there wasn't just one more thing that she could say to me from the spirit of this man, so I would really know who it was who was in communication with me. She said without hesitation, "Of course, Paul, it's the shoes…"

I almost fell out of my chair.

Later, Catherine took me to visit an art museum/chapel alongside the home of the late Italian/New Mexican primitive artist Ted De Grazia, famous for his paintings of children and angels with featureless faces. She thought that since I was an artist too and appreciated Arizona and the Southwest, perhaps Ted De Grazia and I could relate to one another.

She said she was in harmony with the spirit of Ted De Grazia, and that he would sometimes ring the bell of his chapel for her when she asked him to do it. The very unusual chapel had an open ceiling, and you could look up and see the bell in its bell-tower. We were there on a day with no wind. Shortly before we departed, as we sat in the chapel looking at his murals on the walls, she quietly said: "Ted, would you ring your bell for Paul?"

There was a brief pause, and then the silence was filled with one brief gong of the bell, then another. Then all was quiet.

How does one reconcile this with a rational Western-oriented approach to this world? For the conventional Western mind, the usual thinking would be that this would have to be a fraud. A suspicious mind would say that perhaps the bell rings at a specific time, and she was aware of the time and offered to have Ted

ring the bell right before it would have rung anyway. A suspicious mind would have to say, well, maybe she did recognize George Pal from his picture and feigned ignorance. But the bell was not about to ring. And she didn't know the difference between George Pal and John Wesley Powell, who took famous photographs of the Grand Canyon. No one on earth but me knew there was a special significance about shoes when it came to having the spirit of George Pal certify that indeed he was in touch that day.

It was so convincing to me, that I have to concede that there is no alternative for me now but to accept the reality of all this that I have witnessed and lived. I ask myself: Why would a mind so logical as Catherine's – a mind that excels in and teaches high school mathematics – devote herself to validating the truth of spiritualism and the afterlife if she were not entirely convinced?

Another time, I brought a friend from Santa Fe (Rochanya Generous) to have a reading from Catherine at her Tucson home. The two ladies had never met. Rochanya had just had an inexplicable experience in the airport before boarding her flight to Tucson. At the boarding gate, she sat down next to an elderly lady who was wearing clothes that seemed from another era, and the woman asked her: "Do we need to show our driver's license to board the plane?" Of course, they had passed through security, so no I.D. would be necessary, only the plane ticket.

However, at that moment, Rochanya checked her wallet for her driver's license and discovered it was not there! She must have left it back at security! With only minutes to go before boarding, she raced back to security, and to her great relief she discovered that her license had been found. She hurried back to the boarding gate, and the elderly lady was not there, nor was she a passenger on the plane.

Rochanya looked for her aboard, and she was nowhere to be seen. So was the mysterious stranger's question to Rochanya about needing a driver's license a deliberate message, to provoke Rochanya to look for hers?

Rochanya thinks so, and she considers that mysterious lady who "vanished" to be a sort of spiritual messenger or guardian angel.

That statement, of course, will probably drive some of our more skeptical readers to reach for a Scotch and soda.

I was allowed to sit quietly in a chair at some distance from where Catherine and Rochanya were seated, and I could overhear the reading. I knew without question the large number of accuracies in what Rochanya was being told. During the reading, I could see the front door of the house swing open, remain open for a few moments, and then close by itself. There was no one

there.

I could also see there was no wind, because there was a plant beside the door in a large pot, and it was motionless when the door opened. That was evidence that there was no breeze. It happened twice – door open, then door closed, nobody there.

When I told Catherine about this later, she of course took it in stride. “Yes, I’m never surprised when those things happen,” she said. “The spirits are around. They’re always letting me know.”

One of the things Catherine told us when conducting her reading regarding Forrest J Ackerman was that I would not need a medium to be in touch with him, and he intended to accelerate his frequency of contacts with me from the Other Side.

The acceleration of unusual events certainly proved to be true.

The reading from Orit Ish Yemini Tomer about Forrest J Ackerman came in November of 2011, about fifteen months after Catherine’s reading. In fact, a first version of *The Life After Death Project* was complete before she came to America. As you know, Gary and Rhonda had seen that version in the Village of Oak Creek near Sedona, along with an audience that offered suggestions. As I said, one of the main suggestions was to include more about Gary’s research.

My accident of breaking my right ankle in our backyard garden, a month after Gary, Rhonda and I were all in Sedona together, delayed my getting back to Tucson, and it caused Gary to push back the plans with psychic Orit Ish Yemeni Tomer.

Orit arrived in Tucson in November with her friend and associate Professor Tamar Levin, who assisted with translations from Hebrew when necessary.

The reading was held in a hotel room in Tucson. Orit’s reading began with her stating that two people had shown up in spirit in response to our request, and she described them and asked which we were most interested in hearing from. I stated we should communicate with the taller man not the shorter one. Then, methodically, a portrait of Forrest J Ackerman began to emerge.

These are some of my memories of the moments with the most impact: She identified him as a writer, someone who made money from writing and books. Later she added that it wasn’t just books, it was some sort of a magazine, an odd magazine. She thought the letter “F” was prominent in the magazine title. (Of course it is: *Famous Monsters of Filmland*.) She said his beliefs had been toward the “atheistic.” Yes, that was correct.

She said that now that he had passed over, he understood that the vastness of existence was beyond anything he had ever dreamed. She said that there was

one woman in his life with whom he had been closest who knew everything about him. Orit thought that was his wife. She said that he was known by and followed by young people who were fans, like kids who put up posters of a rock star in their rooms, but that the parents of these young people tended to be afraid of this man and what he represented.

All true.

Orit continued by saying that parents saw him as a sort of Pied Piper, but not necessarily a Pied Piper they would want their children following. She said he had a sense of humor that was somewhat twisted, a bit warped, and that although many people might find it funny, others might fail to see the humor in it. Right again.

She said he had a large collection, and as she tried to fathom what the collection was, searching for the right English words, she said it was like "little dolls" but strange dolls – something like Yoda.

How very true that was.

She said his wife's name began with an "M" or an "N," she could not distinguish because in Hebrew they were the same letter.

When asked about the significance of the inkblot… the ink… she replied that he said "it's me, it's mine" – that he claimed responsibility for it. And when contact with him began to fade, she could offer no more.

All of this was nothing short of astounding. A cynic would say she must have known who I was and who I wanted to talk about before she began, because it was so good… almost too good. Or a cynic might say perhaps she was picking this information out of my very mind as I sat there filming her.

Regarding any foreknowledge, I had no contact with her or Dr. Levin at all before I met them right before the reading, and Dr. Schwartz said that he withheld all information about me or the subject of our inquiry.

Over dinner later, Orit claimed that she remembered almost nothing of her readings after they were over. She said that she blurted out these things almost as impulses but that none of it really meant anything to her. She seemed to have no emotional connection to anything she revealed. When I reminded her of a few things she had said, her completely genuine response was often, "Did I say that? I really do not remember."

As she spoke about herself, it was clear that she had had a very complex life, filled with medical issues and difficult recoveries. At some point, she realized she had this gift, and she did her best to put it to good use for the benefit of other people. No money changed hands over our reading, and it was not clear to me whether she generally charges for readings or even considers it a

profession.

One sticking point for me in the reading was her statement that the man's wife's name began with an "M" or an "N." That seemed wrong.

Israeli psychic Orit Ish Yemeni Tomer gave a reading in a hotel in Tucson.

Wendayne does not begin with those letters, unless she was seeing an upside-down "M." For months I thought it was a mistake, until Joe Moe reminded me that Wendayne was not Forry's wife's real name, but that Forry had given it to her as a sort of stage name for her public persona. It stuck, and everyone who knew her called her Wendayne.

Her actual name, Joe said, was Tillie – Tillie Wahrman. That left us with a "T" beginning her first name. However, with a little further inquiry it became clear that Tillie was short for Matilda. Originally her name had been Mathilde, sometimes called Malca, names beginning with an "M." Just as Orit had declared!

Five years previously, when conducting an interview with Joe Moe which I had hoped to use in the film, *The Sci-Fi Boys*, Joe Moe had mentioned to me that Wendayne was not her real name, and I had forgotten it. That interview was not used in *The Sci-Fi Boys*, but I later included it as bonus material in *The Life After Death Project* DVD as a sequence entitled "The Demise of The Ackermansion."

Someone who saw *The Life After Death Project* later contacted me to point out that the issue about Wendayne's name had been brought up to me in that other material.

So I clarify it here: When I had the interview with Orit, I had no conscious recollection that Wendayne Wahrman was not her real name or that her real name began with an "M." That makes it exceedingly unlikely that Orit picked

that detail out of my mind. Just as was the case with Whitley Strieber as Glennys MacKay told him about Milton, his late friend the violinist from Texas, the information was not in consciousness. It was a lost detail, long forgotten.

What do I conclude from this about the powers of mediums? We know they can't all be relied upon. We know there are some impostors and hoaxers. Gary Schwartz in his research has proven this. We understand full well the frustrations of Harry Houdini, when Conan Doyle's wife did a reading for him of his mother and missed entirely on crucial details, such as that she was Jewish – or the nickname she always called him. Much useless information results from some of these efforts. However, as Gary Schwartz likes to quote psychologist William James: It only takes one white crow to disprove the maxim that all crows are black.

There are mediums who are white crows.

IV. What To Conclude?

I will leave you with one other example of a case where a medium, whom I had never met, contacted me with relevant information about something going on in my life she could not possibly have known.

First you need some back-story. You need to know that I was asked by an Italian producer if I would give a video interview about my first boss in the entertainment business, the remarkable talent agent, Paul Kohner. Paul Kohner had handled top European clients such as Ingmar Bergman, Liv Ullman, Max von Sydow, Maurice Jarre, Maurice Chevalier, Twiggy, William Wyler – and American talents such as Charles Bronson, Henry Fonda and John Huston.

I agreed to the interview but knew I had to bone up on the story of Paul Kohner's life, which was best told in a book by his brother, Frederick Kohner, entitled *The Magician of Sunset Boulevard*. Frederick Kohner, who was known as "Fritz," was also the author of all of the series of very popular *Gidget* books.

I kept procrastinating rereading that book, which I had not read in decades (I had worked for Paul Kohner from 1976 to 1980). The interview about Paul Kohner, which was going to include a great deal about his client John Huston, was scheduled for a few days away. However, first Gary Schwartz and I appeared as interview subjects together on the *Coast to Coast AM* late night radio show hosted by George Noory to talk about *The Life After Death Project*. This was shortly before *The Life After Death Project* was televised on the Syfy Channel on May 16, 2013.

The day after the George Noory interview, I received many emails, one of

them from a psychic who assured me she was “the real deal” – a white crow – and that she had been trying to call in to George Noory’s show while we were on the air to give me some psychic information she had just received. She said that the alarm on her cell phone, which she had not set, rang twice while Gary and I were speaking, including when we discussed the quote about how a single white crow will prove that not all crows are black.

Her message to me was that she had heard from someone named Frederick who was called Fritz, and he was urging me to get on with something. She said, “Does that have anything to do with Forry Ackerman?”

It had nothing to do with Forry Ackerman and everything to do with my need to quickly reread Frederick Kohner’s book about his brother, the late Paul Kohner, to be ready for the Italian TV interview.

The message from that unknown psychic was another uncanny piece of the puzzle about mediums. No one but me knew that I was under time pressure to reread that book by Frederick, who was called “Fritz.”

The interview took place, and for some inexplicable reason, the only part of the whole interview where the sound was discernable and you could understand what I was saying was when I was telling about the psychic message the medium had relayed from Frederick. The entire rest of the hour and a half interview had inaudible sound, and the interview had to be done again. Due to circumstances, it had to be delayed for about a year, and the editing of it was left to me.

Well, I had been working on editing, focusing on the parts about Paul Kohner’s relationship with the great director/actor John Huston, whom I had always respected and had the opportunity to get to know personally, and who died in 1987. But a distraction sent the project into limbo again as it sat unfinished while I tended to other things.

Then, out of the blue, I received a message from Catherine Yunt, who knew nothing about any of this. She said, “This might sound odd, but I have a message for you from John Huston. There’s a project of yours that he’s quite interested in and he’d like to see you finish it.” She didn’t know that I even knew John Huston or had any association with him at all.

How’s that for a medium with a message?

We’ll save for much later in this book our adventure with psychics Susanne Wilson and Jamie Clark. They were part of our return to the Ackermansion in May, 2015, and that is a story unto itself.

13. THE CRYPT AND LICENSE PLATES

I. Poetry and Broken Bones

Things were slower for me in the autumn of 2011 with a broken ankle, after the stupidity of my tripping and falling in our garden face forward into a rose bush. I had been holding our cat, Tiger, while walking in our backyard garden in Los Angeles, and when reaching the railroad tie stairs that descend two steps from our backyard patio, I lost my footing. As you already know, my hopes that it was only a sprain were dashed when an x-ray at an emergency room revealed a fracture. My right leg was in a cast, and I had to postpone a trip to Tucson to film in Gary's laboratory.

In fact, Gary proved that the delay worked to our advantage, because when the Tucson trip finally did come about, we were able to combine filming his Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health with the reading from Israeli psychic Orit Ish Yemeni Tomer.

Weeks went by when I was unable to get out of bed – weeks in which I felt especially close to the spirit of Edgar Allan Poe. I couldn't help but wonder if it was his very spirit voice that had whispered the word "Lenore" on my videotape – an electronic voice phenomenon, or EVP.

Volumes of poetry poured out of me during those weeks when I could not walk. There were humorous poems and also serious poems on topics with gravitas, and poems touching on ideas basic to the philosophy of life itself. There were poems about Poe and Forry and John Huston and George Pal and others of my heroes, such as Vincent van Gogh and Ray Harryhausen.

The poems leaped from my fingers faster than I could type them. The words formed in my consciousness at a pace that exceeded my speed at putting them down. Very little rewriting of this rhyming poetry was necessary, just a bit of tweaking here and there. By 2012, I had published the poems in three volumes totaling about 450 pages. Nothing like that had ever happened to me before. It was as though a great gift descended upon me, leaving me with a sense of having

a literary mission.

Eventually, I was able to get out of bed and hobble about the house using crutches. The healing continued, as I found myself able to dispense with the crutches and get by with a cane.

Joe Moe did me a great favor that lifted my spirits. He gifted me Forry Ackerman's cane.

II. The Late Forry 'turns' 95

It was November, 2011, and almost three years had gone by since Forry had died. Around the time of the first anniversary of his death (which also coincided within two weeks of what would have been his 93rd birthday) a gathering was held at a Thai restaurant in Hollywood where he had often held his annual birthday bash for fifty to a hundred friends.

Actress Anne Robinson had come that year (famous for her starring role in the 1953 cinematic masterpiece from George Pal, *The War of The Worlds*). When I discussed the "Forry Phenomena" with her, she was entirely convinced by my description of the Ackerman afterlife contacts. She recounted for me her own experiences with her mother, whose favorite scent was lavender. Sitting at her mother's bedside at the moment of her mother's death, Anne had smelled the scent of lavender pervading the entire room, and there was no obvious physical source for that aroma.

November 24, 2011, would have been Forry's 95th birthday, and on that day, with the aid of Forry's cane, I was able to meet up with a friend (Russell Maynor) and his associate at the House of Pies on Franklin Avenue in Los Angeles. That had been Forry's favorite gathering place during the twilight years of his life, just a few short blocks from what he called the "Acker-mini-mansion," the little yellow house where he had received the giants of the world of science fiction who had come to pay him homage in his fading days. In fact, one of the seventeen heirs in Forry's will was a waitress at the House of Pies. Joe told me she was remembered in his will for having treated him with such respect on his every visit to the restaurant.

Russell Maynor is a professional photographer (and filmmaker) who had taken the last official portrait of Forry. That photo has Forry dressed with the appearance of a vampire, rather spooky. Accompanying Russell at the House of Pies that day was Kerry O'Quinn, the founding publisher of genre magazines such as Starlog, Fangoria and Cinemagic. He had known Forry well.

Whereas Kerry O'Quinn shared Forry's skepticism of all things supernatural, Russell was of the opposite persuasion. Russell's certainty about the existence of spirits and poltergeists far predated mine. At various times, Russell would tell me of the bizarre and sometimes frightening poltergeist experiences he had in an apartment where he had lived while he was a college student.

The final professional portrait of Forry Ackerman, by photographer Russell Maynor.

Russell's spooky experiences had included coming home to find furniture rearranged, and he was certain there were no living humans who could take responsibility for those pranks. The poltergeist torment had continued at such a pace, Russell had become convinced that "something" wanted him to move, and move he did.

By contrast, Kerry O'Quinn would try to "shut his ears" whenever these topics came up, because he thought it was all nonsense. It would be fair to say he was a Type II Skeptic. "I'm from Missouri, don't mess with my mind." It's odd that publishers of magazines about supernatural fiction and films seem to be among the most fervent disbelievers that any such phenomena are ever real.

III. 4EFX

Neither Kerry O'Quinn nor Russell Maynor had been to Forry's crypt before, and after our lunch at the House of Pies, I offered to lead the way up there. We drove in two cars. There was a traffic incident which delayed us from the time we otherwise would have arrived. That delay proved to be significant.

When we got to Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, as I started to lead the way with the Kerry O'Quinn's car following me, a white van pulled in front of me and seemingly started to "lead the way," making every correct turn in a very winding route to get to the crypt.

I suddenly noticed the license plate on the van was 4EFX084. It was not a vanity plate.

To me, the license plate immediately seemed to indicate meaning and purpose. It was a synchronicity that took my breath away.

The van stopped right before the last turnoff to get to the crypt. I stopped too, and so did Kerry's car. I pointed out the license plate on the van to Russell and Kerry.

They were both also struck at once by the synchronicity of 4E and FX. In fact, Russell later reported to me that Kerry O'Quinn had found that to be "very strange indeed."

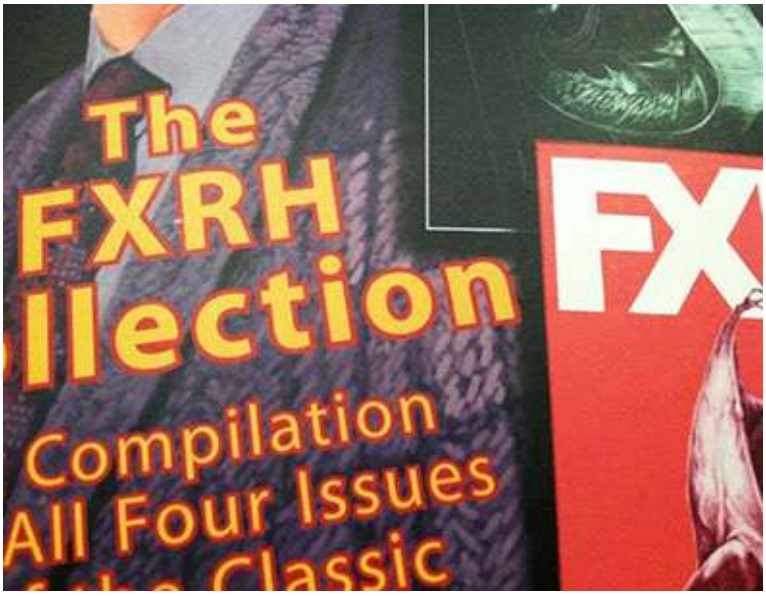
As you are aware, Forry often signed his name 4E. You have seen examples of that in John Allison's chapter. Also, Forry's biggest career contribution was in selling the importance of special effects (FX) to generations of young people who then grew up and changed the nature of the movie business with special effects. That included young readers of *Famous Monsters* such as Rick Baker and Dennis Muren, whose achievements in FX have now brought them a combined total of almost twenty Academy Awards.

It wasn't until later I noticed the serial number on Forry's cane: 084. Thus, that license plate seemed to describe our visit: "4E" "FX" "084."

This was not the only time that an appropriate and meaningful license plate with "4E" followed by "FX" seemed to thrust itself in front of me and was immediately noticed. In fact "4EFX" appeared on another license plate on a car that paced right in front of me when I was on a trip up to Big Bear Lake, right around the time *The Life After Death Project* appeared on national TV on the Syfy Channel.

That second time (with plate "4EFX552") was especially noteworthy because it was immediately followed by another car with the license plate "MO 61." To me, the interpretation of the moment was that a car with a "Forry" license plate swerved in front of me followed by a car that had a "Joe Moe" plate that almost had the year of Joe Moe's birth. The "MO61" plate missed Joe's

birth date by only one year, as Joe was born in 1960.



FX is commonly used in the entertainment business to refer to special effects. In this case, the title of the book, FXRH, refers to special effects created by "RH," meaning Ray Harryhausen.

That second plate was either a government plate or a vanity plate, and I was alert enough at that moment to insist that my wife get photos of both of those cars as I was driving. In spite of her protests, she succeeded, and thus we have a record of it. Later, it was called to our attention that the "NOTW" sticker on the rear windshield of the car with the "MO61" plate means "Not of This World."

This car paced Paul and Hollace close alongside on the freeway on one of their

trips up to Big Bear Lake about the same time The Life After Death Project *was about to be broadcast at last. The plate says 4EFX*.

Within just a minute of the 4EFX car departing, this car pulled up beside Paul and Hollace, with a MO license plate that misses Joe Moe's birth year by one digit. Joe was born in 1960 and this license says 61. Note the NOTW on the rear windshield. It means Not of This World.

Referring back to the time of the visit to Forry's crypt with Kerry O'Quinn and Russell Maynor, we could have all kicked ourselves for our failure to take a photo of the van that had the license plate 4EFX084.

Russell said to me that, for him, it was an exceptionally odd feeling as we stood staring at that plate. It was as though time had slowed down, and none of us thought to take a photo. Since the van had stopped there, we also felt that it would have been awkward if the driver had suddenly wanted to know why his plate was being photographed. Ever since then, I have not hesitated to take an iPhone photo whenever something seemed to be amiss.

We couldn't tell why the white van stopped. It may have been a van whose mission at the cemetery was to deliver flowers to a grave. I noticed that its side windows were too dark to see through.

For me, the mystery of the plate we saw that day was compounded by the fact that the van had pulled right in front of me and had literally led the way right up to the very last turnoff before Forry's crypt. And if Russell and Kerry and I had not been foiled by a traffic jam as our two cars had pulled away from the House of Pies, the timing would have been off and that incident would not have happened.

In the weeks that followed, I tried to find out about that van, to identify its

owner through the plate, but I had no luck. I even returned to the cemetery to try to find out if the van belonged to Forest Lawn Glendale Memorial Park. Apparently it did not.

This was only the beginning, not the ending, of the "high strangeness" involving Forry Ackerman and Russell Maynor. I later learned that Russell made a phone call to an old childhood friend named Wes Haggard, to tell him about the incident at Forest Lawn. Wes and Russell had been what has come to be known as "monster kids." They had been children of about ten back in the earliest days of *Famous Monsters* magazine, and they were diehard fans of monster movies who would watch every single one that came on TV, or they would attend every Saturday afternoon double-feature at the movies.

Wes and Russell both had collected Forry's *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine, but Wes had long since moved on to other interests. Wes had not thought about Forry Ackerman for over forty years. However, Russell called him to remind him of those days, because he thought Wes would appreciate the curious experience we had driving up to Forry's crypt.

The next sequel in our odyssey happened about a month later when I was back in Santa Fe. Russell Maynor lived in Albuquerque, so it was easy for him to drive up to visit me when I was in Santa Fe, especially when I enticed him with the opportunity to see an unfinished version of *The Life After Death Project.*

What happened next is, for me (and for Russell), one of the strangest incidents of this entire saga, defying explanation and escaping any rational effort on our part to explain it, in terms of both timing and substance.

While watching the rough-cut of my film, Russell began to get text messages on his phone, all of which he ignored. He didn't want his concentration interrupted.

When the screening was over and Russell departed, he checked his text messages and saw that they were all from Wes. Wes was rather urgent in his request to "call me!"

What could Wes have wanted that would be so important?

Russell called Wes while driving. Wes wanted to know if it was Russell who had sent him the documentary (by Michael MacDonald and Ian Johnston, the two Canadians) about Forry Ackeman.

"What?" Russell asked. "What are you talking about?"

Russell definitely had not sent Wes a documentary about Forry Ackerman.

Wes wanted to know: Then who could have sent it? It had arrived that day in the mailbox. Wes had assumed that surely Russell must have sent it, and he

did not look carefully at the envelope before throwing it away. He seemed to recall that it did not have a return address, but he was not certain. After tossing it, he began to wonder, and he wanted to confirm that Russell had sent it to him, so he had texted Russell… several times. Apparently the trash bag with the envelope had already been deposited in a large trash bin outside.

Wes knew no one in his life anymore who ever thought about (or cared about) Forrest J Ackerman. He said nobody but Russell could have sent it to him, but Russell swears he absolutely did not send it.

The issue of how that documentary film DVD about Forry ended up in Wes's mailbox, and why, became such a psychological crisis that Wes went to rummage through the trash bin to find the envelope. However, as bad luck would have it, the trash had just been collected.

This is one of the strangest incidents, especially when you consider that the two Canadian filmmakers who made that documentary (*Famous Monster – Forrest J Ackerman*) were the first two to receive an apparent message from the late Ackerman on their computers, after Michael MacDonald had rapped on Forry's crypt!

Someone sent that DVD to Wes, but who, why and how? It is an unanswered question to this day, and it simply makes no sense, since Wes had not discussed Forry or his magazine in decades with anyone but Russell (and that one occasion was the day of our visit to the crypt).

Russell is convinced that no one but "the ghost of Forry Ackerman himself" would have had a motivation to send that DVD to make a point for two old fans. And what was that point? The point was the same as the point he made to me when he "dropped me line" by changing my document. The point was that life goes on. It does not end with death. Spirits, which is what we call them for want of a more precise term, can and do interact with living people. And the spirit now engaging us was just as determined, precise, vivacious, perspicacious, playful, mischievous and self-promoting as was our friend Forry when he was alive.

The fact that the timing of the arrival of that Canadian DVD in the mailbox coincided precisely with Russell watching *The Life After Death Project* rough-cut at my Santa Fe house was an extraordinary timing of fate – a truly remarkable synchronicity.

When Michael MacDonald learned about this, his reaction was one of shock and awe, especially since he realized how few copies of his Canadian DVD had ever reached the United States.

14. MORE APPORTS AND POLTERGEIST MISCHIEF

I. Mysterious Matching Shoes

There has been “high strangeness” in many events seemingly related to the phenomena of apports, the disappearance or sudden appearance of various objects.

The appearance of the DVD of the Forry documentary in Wes Haggard’s mailbox could be considered an apport. An apport is the result of a seemingly paranormal transference of an item from one place to another, or an appearance of an item from an unknown source. The disappearance of the Todd Mills slides of the Zimbabwe mask could also be considered an apport – vanishing rather than appearing. That, in turn, was similar to the missing white whale and my several pairs of trousers, in which something simply vanishes and is never seen again.

Here is another example:

On what turned out to be my mother’s final birthday before she passed away, during that morning for some reason I decided to sort out all the pairs of shoes in my closet in our Los Angeles home.

My father, who passed away back in 1996, often lectured me when I was young about the importance of taking care of my shoes, including polishing them regularly. It was a similar philosophy to the parental advice to “eat all the vegetables on your plate because there are children starving in Africa.” Millions of people in the world do not have the luxury of buying a new pair of shoes when they need them, so as a matter of principle, I knew I ought to have taken better care of mine. Most of them were beginning to look worn, and none had been polished in a long time.

I pulled about twenty shoes out of my closet and proceeded to match them, since in my habitual sloppiness they had been scattered about and not matched as pairs. When I was done, I had two odd black shoes left over. They definitely

did not match. I looked around more in my closet, getting down on hands and knees to scour the closet floor. No luck finding the missing shoes.

However, I allowed for the fact that the matches might still have been in the closet, on a shelf where I looked too quickly, perhaps, or maybe they got waylaid in another room. I did not have time to solve the problem just then, so I set the two odd shoes on the floor of the master bedroom near the French doors that open onto the upper deck, and I decided I would deal with this later.

My wife had departed for work at her office at Universal Pictures, and I began editing work in my video editing office on the main floor of our two-story home. The house is a very old but restored California bungalow, originally built in 1910 with a beam ceiling in the living room. The ficus trees on either side of the front steps by the front porch have grown so large through the many decades, their thick limbs, with so many leaves, provide shade in all seasons.

It was not the maid's day to come, and I was alone. After working about three hours, I took a break and went upstairs, and I was astonished to notice that the "odd" pair of unmatched shoes I had put by the French doors was no longer an odd pair. It was now a matched pair. When I looked in my closet, I found the other "odd" shoe on a shelf, and it was now matched with its mate.

How could this possibly have happened?

Like so many other things I have testified to, it is impossible. But it did happen, and there is no chance at all that the shoes were already matched when I had set them down by the French doors.

I must put this into a similar category as apport phenomena, because it appeared that some spirit had solved the problem for me… on my mother's birthday. Of course it sent a chill up and down my spine. Was it my father?

II. Cash or Check?

Or consider what happened to my close friend, Robert Rotstan, Jr., who had attended two of Forry's annual birthday celebrations (once in a Chinese restaurant and once at the famous Friars Club). Note that Bob Rotstan, like Forry while he was alive, subscribed to the philosophy of being a "materialist reductionist." He did not believe in any paranormal phenomena, religion, God, or the afterlife. It was all in the realm of "woo-woo" for him.

Bob and I had been friends for years, and he had been associate producer on several of my films. That includes *Starry Night* and *The Artist And the Shaman*, and he appears at the end of *The Sci-Fi Boys* in the end credit sequence, where

he is a tourist on his hands and knees on Hollywood Boulevard, polishing the sidewalk stars of various Hollywood film pioneer producer/directors, such as George Pal and Roger Corman.

It's even more important to know that Bob was an associate producer on my film, *Jesus in India*, and he was responsible for bringing me the idea for the project in the first place. He urged me to take on that project, continuing to push for it for about two years after I originally turned it down. Why was it so important to Bob? The premise contradicted conventional traditions of Christianity, and that was a big plus for Bob. The Catholic Church does not accept that Jesus traveled to India during the so-called "Missing Years of Christ," from ages thirteen to thirty. In India, many Hindus and Buddhists believe Jesus did travel there and even learned many things from their traditions. For Bob, "tweaking the nose" of the church was a good thing. I signed on to the project for other reasons. I gradually became persuaded that it was a fascinating concept, and that there was some evidentiary support for the idea, and that it was historically possible.

On one occasion, my wife and I invited Bob to join us in Big Bear Lake, along with the composer of the musical scores for several of my films, Brian Thomas Lambert. Brian is a devotee of Paramahansa Yogananda and meditates daily. He believes in "spiritual phenomena." He has no difficulty at all accepting the fact that I am accurately reporting all of the unusual and unexplained incidents that have happened since Forry's death.

Bob and Brian are polar opposites, philosophically.

The day started out as an idyllic time, but it deteriorated into an endless debate between Bob and Brian. It was like a clash of the Titans, and neither would surrender any ground to the other. As for my experiences, at that time Bob discounted all of the Forry-related phenomena that had been happening to me as "probably explainable" (though he could not explain any of it), and he butted heads with Brian from early afternoon until late that night.

I had taken several photos of Bob with Forry at the birthday parties, and even though Bob had never been a reader of *Famous Monsters*, I knew he had a continuing interest in Forry. Thus, in June of 2010, when a book came out by Al Estrella and James Greene called *House of Ackerman* (to which I contributed heavily with photos and an essay), I urged Bob to order a copy. I pointed out that list price was thirty-five dollars. Thus, for about forty dollars, including postage, he could have a copy of the book.

Bob Rotstan with Forrest J Ackerman at an Acker-party.

Bob procrastinated on ordering the book, and then along came the incident with the forty dollars. Bob had ordered a pizza one night to be delivered to his home in Alisa Viejo in Orange County, California. Paying the delivery man had depleted every cent in Bob's wallet. He is certain that when he went to bed that night, his wallet was empty.

When he awoke in the morning, there were two crisp twenty dollar bills in his wallet. He was totally baffled and troubled to the core of his very being. He cross-examined his wife and son, and both insisted they absolutely had not put any money in Bob's wallet. There was nobody who could have done it.

I pointed out to Bob that maybe this was a response to his hard-headed skepticism about my incidents with Forry. I reminded him that I had urged him to order the book about Forry, which would have cost him forty dollars. I was not joking when I suggested that perhaps Forry had put the money there as if to say to Bob: "Here's the money. Order the book already!" I also noted that "forty" sounds a lot like "Forry."

Bob laughed at my suggestion, but he remained entirely baffled.

Then the other Bob Rotstan incidents began.

Bob lost his peace of mind over this, and like Dr. Michael Shermer, the

Executive Director of the Skeptics Society (who is also publisher of *Skeptic* magazine), the incidents that began happening to Bob shook his skepticism to the very core. (The story of what happened to Dr. Shermer is described in his own words – an excerpt from *Scientific American* magazine, in Chapter 18. This excerpt also has been widely disseminated online.)

III. The Dog Ate Bob's Cummerbund

Bob's dog on two occasions began barking furiously at the front door, and Bob heard noises as though someone were trying to open the door, including a sound as though someone was jiggling the handle. However, each time he checked, there was no one there, and there was no break-in attempt.

About that time, I invited Bob to accompany me to the Golden Globe Awards. Bob took out his tuxedo and began to get dressed for the award ceremony. Bob recalls distinctly what happened as he was getting dressed in his tuxedo. He knows he had his cummerbund with his trousers, cufflinks, shirt and tie, all laid out neatly on his bed. He distinctly remembers seeing the cummerbund. However, after putting on his shirt and pants, the cummerbund was missing.

He began a search for it with no success. He even went out to his driveway and car, wondering if he somehow could have had it in his hand and dropped it while retrieving something from his car. The cummerbund, for all appearances, had vanished. In fact, he had to attend the Golden Globe Awards in his tuxedo without that cummerbund.

About a week later, the cummerbund turned up neatly folded in his wife's underwear drawer. He was in shock when his wife found it there. They have no maid. He did not put it there, and his wife did not put it there, either.

This is where, for the pure skeptic, one begins to entertain psychological theories about "fugue states." The concept of a "fugue state" is like a somnambulistic state of mind, or sleepwalking state, in which one does something of which one has no recollection. As I explained in my first chapter, it is a theory skeptics sometimes use to try to dispense with anomalies that otherwise require the intervention of a spirit – or violation of the known laws of physics.

The problem with that kind of explanation is when you try to apply it to people who have no history at all of ever having undergone any fugue state.

When the Society for Psychical Research wrote a review of *The Life After Death Project* they went through a checklist of what possible rational

explanations there could be for my inkblot incident. The possibility that I was a hoaxer made their list, and I did my best to eradicate that proposal by writing to them and swearing, as I have done in the notarized document at the beginning of this book, that there was no hoax. The concept of my having been in a fugue state also made their list. In other words, was it possible that I created the inkblot while in a sort of trance state and then had no recollection whatsoever that I had done it?

I have never to my knowledge experienced any spontaneous fugue states. When I was in college, I participated in a hypnosis experiment at a time when I was pursuing an undergraduate psychology degree. However, I have not been subjected to hypnosis for over forty years. I don't smoke, so I have no need to use hypnosis to conquer smoking, and no one has ever convinced me it can help you lose weight – if they had, maybe I would have looked into it. And my wife will back up the fact that I am no sleepwalker. So no fugue states for me. Furthermore, the scientific research of the ink obliteration eliminates that as an explanation for the incident that began this mystery for me. Dr. Allison could not duplicate the opacity in the ink obliteration after trying for several years. He eventually told me, "You couldn't have done it even if you wanted to – I couldn't do it, and believe me, I have been trying very hard."

Is Bob Rotstan subject to fugue states? Bob and his family know of no incidents of that and would describe that explanation as "grasping at straws." However, the fugue state explanation is often called into service by Type II Skeptics when, from a purely rational perspective, there is nothing else to try to grasp.

IV. Sunglasses, Whales, I.D., Clothing, More Opening Doors and Oranges – Is There A Trend Here?

A friend named Saundra who now lives near Phoenix once sent me a splendid book of the science fiction art of Frank R. Paul. She did not know that Forry Ackerman was a collector of Frank R. Paul's work, and that Forry had even commissioned some custom pieces from him. However, she did know of my connection to Forry, and she was sure the science fiction art in the book would appeal to me. Furthermore, she explained that while she was in the bookstore, she literally felt the spirit of Forrest urging her to send it to me.

I sent Saundra a note of thanks for the book, and a couple years passed where we did not see one another. Eventually we got together for a lengthy lunch in Scottsdale, Arizona, near where she lived, and we talked for hours.

When I escorted her to her car, she gasped when she glanced at the floor on the passenger side. There was a pair of sunglasses there – sunglasses in a glasses case. She explained she had been looking for those sunglasses for at least six months. She knew they were not in her car – she had searched it thoroughly, including the floor by the front passenger seat. In fact, the car had been washed at professional car washes numerous times since the sunglasses had gone missing. But there they were.

After the lengthy discussion we had just had, Saundra decided it was another prank by Forry. Another apport?

Following the white whale episode, Hollace had another possible apport experience that involved a pair of earrings she had loaned to a close friend, a professional singer. The singer had borrowed several items of jewelry to use for a performance and showed up the next day to return them. However, when all of the items were examined, the earrings were not in the small jewelry holder where they were supposed to be. The singer could not believe it – she was horrified that the earrings were not there. She had borrowed jewelry before and had never failed to care for and return every item. Furthermore, she was positive she had placed them in the jewelry holder, and it had not left her possession or been handled carelessly.

The earrings vanished and were never found. There is no reason to suspect that theft or error was involved in this case, but there was never a plausible explanation.

On another occasion, Hollace's driver's license was missing from her wallet. After a meticulous search which included, she thought, inspecting every crevice of her wallet, she assumed the worst – that she had left the driver's license somewhere when presenting I.D. She promptly went to the Department of Motor Vehicles, which canceled that license and issued a new one.

A few days later, the missing Driver's License showed up, precisely where it was supposed to be in her wallet, as though it were never missing. Trying to apply rationality to the incident, she postulated that perhaps her license had become stuck to the bottom of a credit card and she hadn't noticed two cards being stuck together during her search. When she offered that possible explanation, however, I didn't think she really sounded convinced. If you lost a driver's license, wouldn't you check to see if it got stuck to another card in your wallet before driving to the Department of Motor Vehicles?

The third incident, two days after the second anniversary of her father's death, left no room for a rational explanation at all. Visiting a colleague from Universal Pictures, she was wearing her studio I.D. badge on a chain around her

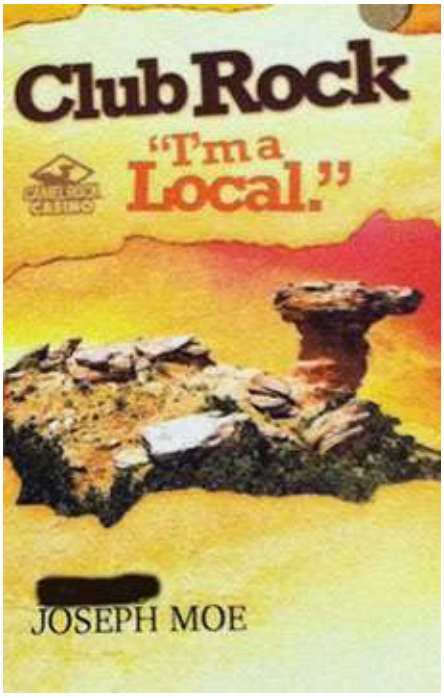
neck. This was the I.D. that she used evrery day, swiping it to gain admittance to studio parking. Soon after departing her colleague's house, she discovered the I.D. badge was missing along with the chain.

She arranged to get a new I.D. badge. Soon afterwards, her colleague's gardener reported finding Hollace's I.D. in the garden of her colleague's house, and the chain was still snapped together. It had not been unfastened. As Hollace went over in her mind the details of her visit to her friend's house, she realized there was literally no way it could have fallen off.

As for me, one day in 2014 while searching for something in my desk drawer, I came across Joe Moe's player's card from the Camel Rock Casino in Santa Fe. Yes, Joe had been to Santa Fe while helping me edit *The Life After Death Project*. And yes, I had taken him to that casino where he had obtained a player's card. It went into Joe's wallet. I never handled it. How did it end up in a desk drawer in my home office?

The same desk drawer played a similar trick on me in August of 2015. I cleaned out the entire drawer, and the very last item in the back of the drawer was Sean Fernald's eye medical insurance card (Eye-Med) from November 22, 2002. First of all, I never knew Sean, really, until 2009. As I explained, we had just been passing acquaintances at Forry's parties before then. I never had occasion to take possession of his eye medical insurance card, and he never worked in that room in my house. When I informed Sean about this, he told me that on that very day that I contacted him about this, he had received an email from his optometrist informing him it was time for his annual eye exam. He said he is only in contact with the optometrist once a year. We also noted that November 22 of 2002, the effective date of that card, was two days before Forry's 86th birthday.

How to explain those things? I cannot.



Joe Moe's Santa Fe casino player's card that showed up in Paul's top desk drawer in Los Angeles.

Sean Fernald's Eyemed card from about 7 years before Paul got to know Sean also showed up in the same drawer of my desk.

Also, in this same discussion of apports, I must tell you that on a trip to our Santa Fe house in the winter of 2014, I brought with me only one sport coat. It was an older one and had some tears in the inner lining by the interior pocket. In other words, its only value was sentimental, and it was certainly time for me to improve the wardrobe I took with me when I traveled.

During that trip, one morning the sport coat was not where I always placed it. I was in the habit of always putting it on the back of a chair in the dining

room. I searched the entire house and determined it was not there. Then I began inquiring at every place I had been to see where I might have left it – at the casino? At the movie theater? In a friend's car? At the piano bar? No luck anywhere. I then received an invitation to an exclusive event (the opening of an exhibit of Goya drawings) at the Santa Fe Museum of Art, and I needed another sport coat immediately. I went out to buy one.

That evening, returning from the museum event, I went downstairs in the Santa Fe house and checked on the large downstairs bedroom.

Joe Moe (left), Paul Davids (center) and Sean Fernald (right) together for Halloween Horror Night at Universal Theme Park.

I checked there because I had deliberately left a heater running, because a friend from Scottsdale, Arizona, would be coming for an overnight visit. I had placed the heater there just hours before and certainly had not observed my old sport coat in that room. However, upon my return to the Santa Fe house after the art event, the sport coat was in obvious plain sight in that downstairs bedroom draped over the control panel of the treadmill.

How did it get there?

It is not a place I would ever have left it.

I was alone during this trip to Santa Fe, so no one else physically present would have put it there, and as for me, if I had decided to take off my sport jacket while in that room, I had plenty of logical places to put it aside from draping it over a treadmill control panel.

This is where the sport jacket turned up after an exhaustive search of house, restaurant, contacting friends, etc. It was on the control panel of the treadmill. Paul wondered it it was a hint from a friendly spirit that he needed to do more aerobic exercise?

There was a couch in that room where I could have set it down. There were chairs – and also a large closet with a lot of empty clothes hangers. It was another mystery, which supported the notion that real prankish poltergeist activity was continuing.

Edward T. Martin, the main personality in my feature documentary, *Jesus in India* (who helped me search for the missing easel and pants while he was visiting for the Santa Fe Film Festival in 2009), had yet another incident in that house. It was night, and he was packing up to depart the next morning. His car was in the garage. I had been watching a film on DVD with another friend (Jillian Burgin) in the recreation room downstairs (next to the room with the treadmill), and suddenly the DVD player jammed.

It was not at all obvious why it was not working. While I struggled to get it working again, Ed began to load up his car with his suitcases, books and whatever he had brought for the occasion of the film festival. He reported that after every trip to the garage, he deliberately left the door open between the garage and the kitchen. Each of three times he took another load to his car, he saw that the door had become closed in the few minutes he was gone. He “felt spooked,” as the expression goes.

There is nothing wrong with that door. It is not at an angle, and there is no

problem of equilibrium that would cause it to swing closed. Furthermore, whether the forced air heating was on in the house or not made no difference – that door simply does not close by itself under ordinary circumstances.

However, these were not ordinary circumstances. At that time, I was in the downstairs recreation room, down on my hands and knees inspecting video cables and trying in other ways to get the DVD player working again. In other words, I was too distracted to go upstairs to check on the door that had alarmed Ed.

By the time he had loaded his car and voluntarily closed the door to the garage and came down to tell me the whole story, at that moment the DVD player suddenly started working. I was not aware of anything I had done that might have fixed it, and from that point on, it did not fail again.

It felt as though the DVD player had been jammed as a distraction for me, specifically so that I would not be paying attention and checking up on things while a mischievous poltergeist played tricks on Ed – closing the kitchen door to the garage three times – the same door that he had left wide open.

On a night just after I had returned from a trip to Portland Oregon, I visited the Magic Castle on Orange Drive in Hollywood, and I noticed a black town car with an Oregon license plate beginning FJA, Forry's initials. This was right near the hostel where Michael MacDonald and Ian Johnston had first received the apparent computer communication from Forry. The hostel also was on Orange Drive in Hollywood.

You will hear a great deal more about mysteries involving the word "orange" and actual orange juice in one of Gary's chapters in Part Two. Gary and Rhonda certainly were not immune from experiencing apports, either.

V. Synchronicities Continue

Gary hypothesizes that spirits, in exercising their intention (or agenticity, as skeptic Michael Shermer would say) take action and cause things to happen through living people's actions – that they can influence people to do or say things, or to send a message, and yet the person being influenced would have no idea how or why. You could compare this to the reading of a psychic, such as Lisa Marie, who sent me (via Gary) sixteen short phrases or words she had heard.

The hypothesis is that a spirit was "working through her" – literally putting words in her mouth. Many psychics claim their experience is like that, and that they have no real conscious recollection of what it is they've said afterwards, or

why they said it. However, they serve a purpose of sending a message (apparently) by saying what they say in order to convey some unseen being's intentions.

The skeptic's answer is always that we are reading too much into these examples by our own interpretations, and that there is no agenticity whatsoever from any "unseen beings" in our universe; that it is all nothing but associations created by our pattern-seeking brains. Sometimes, though, as in these examples, the associations are all too obvious to be merely a product of an enthusiastic brain that is seeking to impose a pattern upon meaningless and unrelated data.

Here's another series of uncanny synchronicities. The late Ronald Waite, who until he passed away in 2015 had spent his later years living near Carlsbad Caverns, New Mexico, had gotten in touch with me out of the blue while dispursing his collections. Ron had been Forry Ackerman's live-in assistant at the Ackermansion for many years back in the 1970s, but he had been out of that scene for a long time and had not been in touch with any of Forry's friends since Forry's death. That is, until he became motivated one day to make me a gift of all of the memorabilia and collectables he had from his days working for Forry Ackerman.

He had seen my film, *The Sci-Fi Boys*, which honored Forry and Forry's contribution to cinema history, and he decided on his own that I was the one to be the custodian for all that he had that was related to our common friend (or should I say, our most "uncommon" friend).

This collection from Ron Waite, consisting of several boxes and thick envelopes, arrived in the mail most unexpectedly, and it included his entire correspondence with Boris Karloff's daughter, Sara.

There were dozens of original postcards and handwritten letters he had received from Sara. This struck me as uncanny because of the timing. When I showed Russell Maynor (Forry's friend who took the last official portrait of him… as a vampire) the rough cut of *The Life After Death Project*, he had urged me to correct one serious mistake.

While referring to Boris Karloff as Frankenstein, the documentary erroneously showed an image of actor Glenn Strange playing Frankenstein, not the immortal Karloff. It was the very day that I fixed that mistake in the movie, putting an image of Boris Karloff where it belonged in the film, that the postman delivered all those boxes from Ron Waite. As I said, those boxes included many years of correspondence from Sara Karloff to Ron. It was extraordinary and very bizarre.

As Russell Maynor pointed out, Forry would have been upset and

embarrassed (even though he was no longer physically with us) if I had left an image of the wrong actor playing Frankenstein in my documentary.

I was urged by Russell to fix it, and so one wonders whether the spirit of Forry was pleased and put the bug in Ron Waite's ear that as long as he didn't want his memorabilia of his days in the Ackermansion anymore, why not gift it all to me?

I fixed the Karloff mistake in the film about twenty minutes before all those unexpected Sara Karloff materials from Ron arrived at my door. There is the uncanny fact of the gift itself, but an equal mystery is the timing – the very hour that I received it.

However, that wasn't all, not by any means. Among the treasures that arrived was a drawing of a haunted house from an H. P. Lovecraft story called "From Beyond," which was signed to me from Ron Waite as "Greetings From Beyond."

Sara Karloff holding art depicting her father, Boris, as Frankenstein.

Forry and Howard P. Lovecraft were what you could describe as "frenemies." As a young upstart horror literature critic, Forry had criticized some of Lovecraft's stories severely. They had hardly been on speaking terms

for years, until they softened toward one another, mutual respect grew and eventually there was peace between them. In the séance held in May, 2015, during our return to the Ackermansion, medium Susanne Wilson told us Howard was present – Howard with a last name beginning with "L." She also said he was a "frenemy" of Forry. Joe Moe blurted out at that moment: "H. P. Lovecraft."

And then there was the *Wizard of Oz* wristwatch included in the package of memorabilia from Ron Waite that had belonged to Forry. It had an image of Judy Garland as Dorothy on the watch face, and the hands of the watch were at a few minutes to twelve (as in minutes to midnight… or noon).

This was Forry's Wizard of Oz watch exactly as Paul Davids received it from Forry's former assistant, Ron Waite.

Of course, a couple minutes to midnight was the time Forry died, so I naturally assumed Ron Waite had deliberately set the hands on that wristwatch.

This was not the case.

I asked Ron if he had tampered with the watch or set the hands to a specific time, and he said "absolutely not."

The watch, he explained, was exactly as he had received it from Forry. Though Forry was the scholar on all things of science fiction, horror and fantasy, the tale of the *Wizard of Oz* was evidently too pedestrian for his taste, so he had given that watch to Ron as a gift. Ron had never worn it, and he had left it exactly as he had received it. In fact, he swore that he didn't even know what time Forry had passed away, and he was very surprised when I told him.

Hold onto your seat, because we are just getting warmed up. There I was in Gary Schwartz' house, recounting to him the recent unexplained Forry-related incidents, including the massive gift from Ron Waite that included the Sara Karloff letters and the *Wizard of Oz* watch, when all of a sudden an alarm clock rang. Gary was startled. Where was the alarm clock? None of us in the room

could even determine that at first. And then Gary reached deep underneath the pillow of his chair and pulled out a travel alarm clock, and that alarm was still ringing.

Gary will have much more to say about this himself in "Chapter 23: Having Direct Personal Experiences."

Gary had not set the alarm, and he had definitely not turned it on. He glanced at the time on the clock that the alarm went off – two minutes to twelve! We were all aghast. We were saying at that moment: if that wasn't "a message from Forry," then what was? Wasn't it as if some unseen agent had caused that alarm to go off, right then?

The next incident happened less than five minutes later. Gary got up to go to the bathroom. He has a personal bathroom. No one used it but him. He came out of it a few minutes later asking us which one of us had been inside of his bathroom. Of course, the answer was none of us.

He couldn't understand what had happened. Earlier he had placed a fresh roll of toilet paper on the bathroom floor by the sink and left it there. However, when he had just entered in bathroom, that same roll of toilet paper was halfway across the room (still on the floor). Furthermore, it was not trailing toilet paper as it would have if it had somehow rolled. Once again, no one in the house had touched that roll of toilet paper and no one took responsibility for the anomaly. It moved across that room like the mask of Forry's face had moved ten feet across my office.

15. INSTRUMENTAL TRANS-COMMUNICATION

I. Computers

While it is fascinating to dwell on the physical effects I am reporting – the changing of objects with ink, the appearance and disappearance of objects, the chiming of old, unused clocks, the sudden movement of objects such as masks – perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the case is its component suggesting use of technology for communication. These incidents have continued for years. They are bizarre and inexplicable, presenting themselves as strange anomalies that cannot be understood and explained even by computer, photographic, and video experts. Perhaps the cappers were two of the most recent incidents – the sudden and unexplained change of the music on my iPod to play *The Phantom of the Opera*, and the Furby with five year old batteries that began working again and said "Four-EEEE" to Dr. John Allison – twice! It also said "ring ring" to him while he was writing up a theory that overlapped Gary Schwartz' research – the idea of a phone that could talk to spirit.

Ring-ring. Perfect timing.

Some may take issue with my conclusion that these incidents, of which I've kept comprehensive inventories, have no conventional explanations. We live in a technological era which at times seems to approach what experts call "the singularity," in which our devices seem to develop minds of their own.

Computers are in communication with each other. We know that iPhones are linked to iPads, and everything seems to have records stored in "The Cloud." How can we be sure, then, that very weird electronic anomalies, that seem to suggest communication from a departed spirit, aren't a kind of technological residue or echo of data that arbitrarily pops up from our devices because of things we do unknowingly?

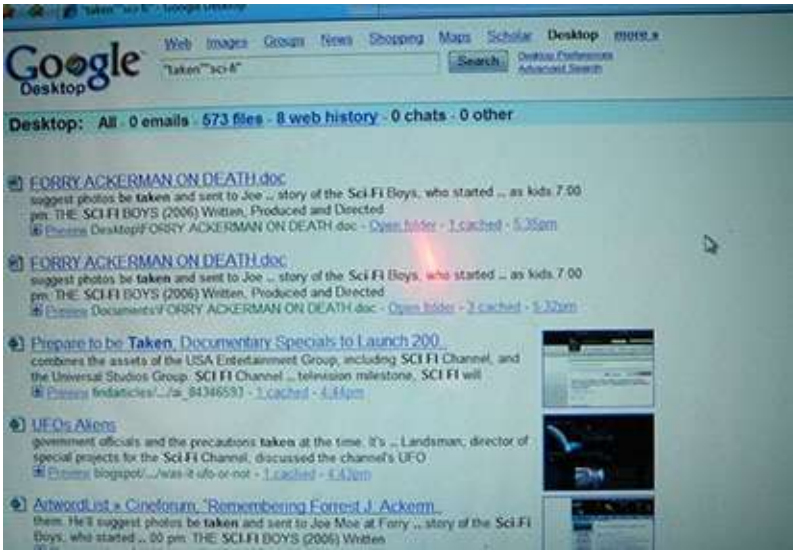
I have noticed that these Instrumental Trans-Communications began for me with a certain subtlety but accelerated in complexity and strangeness. As I recall, I first noticed something odd when someone asked me via email if I could

remember the year of the broadcast of Steven Spielberg's mini-series about alien abduction. This request came to me on August 30th, 2009. I recalled that the series was called *Taken* and that it appeared on the Sci-Fi network (before the network was renamed Syfy).

I did a Google search of the words "Sci-Fi" and "Taken" and on the first page of results, up popped entries about Forrest J Ackerman's ruminations on death.

Think for a moment about how unlikely that is. I'm asked for information about something entirely unrelated to this – and the search results give Forrest J Ackerman's contemplations about death, with references to leaving red carnations at his grave when he dies, having photos "taken" of those flowers and sending them to Joe Moe. That is the use of the word "taken" in the Forry article that causes it to show up in a Google search of "taken" and "sci-fi" – but think how many other articles there must be about "sci-fi" that use the word "taken" somewhere in the article. Why did Forrest J Ackerman's ruminations on death get so much prominence?

It was so unlikely this would happen that I took a picture of the screen showing the specific Google search. See the first, second and fifth entries. And to the right of the large word Google at the top, you can see that the two search words were "taken" followed by "sci-fi."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Desktop: All · 0 emails · 573 files · 8 web history · 0 chats · 0 other
FORRY ACKERMAN ON DEATH.doc
FORRY ACKERMAN ON DEATH.doc
Prepare to be Taken, Documentary Specials to Launch 200...
UFOs Aliens
Artworld.ist » Cinéforum: "Remembering Forrest J. Ackerm..."

Try a Google search of "Sci-Fi" and "Taken." It won't bring up Forry Ackerman's ruminations on death anymore. But it did on August 30, 2009.

Some may question whether my browser history had an influence on the

search results (i.e., I have no doubt made previous Google searches for the word "sci-fi" and that would surely have brought up search results about Forrest J Ackerman.) However, even if that were a factor, which is undetermined, how likely is it that out of possibly thousands of entries online about sci-fi, the entry about Forrest J Ackerman's ruminations on death would come right to the top just because the word "taken" was included in the online search? The search result even contained Forry making a reference to Joe Moe in connections with flowers for Forry's crypt!

Here is the email, verbatim, that I wrote to John Allison in August, 2009, to explain the mystery of this apparent ITC, or Instrumental Trans-Communication.

Hi John,

Here's the photo of the screen. I've attached it for you.

I put in "taken" and "sci-fi" and 2 documents about Forry in Microsoft Word from my computer came up referenced at the top, and then a couple more down in the internet search from Google on the very first Google page (the one that begins ArtWord List Cineforum) is the Ackerman rumination on death that includes the phrase "He'll suggest that photos be taken and sent to Joe Moe…."

Now when I try again to put in the same search no reference to Ackerman comes up anywhere on the first 10 pages of the Google search, and yet the Artword List Cineforum is still online.

Paul

In summary, it's not only of note that Forry's ruminations on death came up in multiple places on the first page of the Google search of "taken" and "sci-fi" when I first did this search on August 30, 2009, but it's also significant that it stopped coming up soon afterwards. That gives it all the more appearance of a sort of intended message, because it could not be repeated later, and John Allison was not able to repeat it on his computer, either. However, the photo I took of the screen is the evidence of what happened.

II. Clocks and EVPs

While we were filming, there were various incidents one could consider to be ITC. The chiming clock in Dr. John Allison's home can be considered "Instrumental Trans-Communication," because a technological instrument (a clock) was involved. The same can be said of the alarm clock hidden in Gary

Schwartz' chair that went off with its hands at a few minutes to twelve.

Similarly, in Dr. Jay Siegel's lab, the computer that suddenly came to life and logged back on to a closed program – by itself – was strange. The word "Lenore" appearing as an electronic voice phenomenon (EVP) has been discussed – that is a form of Instrumental Trans-Communication. And another example would be the very odd fact that in my interview about Paul Kohner for an Italian TV producer (Antonio Villani), all of the audio for the entire interview was corrupted except the few minutes when I talked about the paranormal message from the psychic who heard me on *Coast to Coast AM* and said she had a message for me from "Frederick who they called Fritz."

III. Scot Johnson

We filmed at the Center for Creative Arts (CCA) in Santa Fe, using a large display they had on exhibit – a gigantic prop that was an artistic and highly inventive ship. The exhibit was called "The Due Return," and it represented an imaginative time-traveling, space-traveling, inter-dimensional vessel. We were permitted to use this exhibit as one of the sets for *The Life After Death Project*. For the documentary, we called it the "Ship of the Afterlife."

Scot Johnson, a scientist who works at Los Alamos in one of the science labs – and who sometimes acts in local community theater (he played Sherlock Holmes once) – agreed to be the male narrator for my film.

I sent him lines to learn, and we set the time and day for him to come to the "ship" at CCA. He cautioned me that once in a very rare while he might get called to come to the lab where he works for an emergency, and that if that were to happen, he would have to stop filming and we would have to reschedule.

That would have been a major disruption for me, because it was so difficult to find a time that worked for me to use the CCA set. In any event, he came to perform as narrator for *The Life After Death Project*.

We hardly had begun when the dreaded phone call came through. There was an emergency, and he would have to get back to Los Alamos at once.

I was crestfallen, for about two minutes. Then, after about two minutes of high anxiety had passed, he received another call that was a reprieve. Forget the alarm, he was told, he wouldn't be needed after all. Scot Johnson, who, in spite of his scientific career, is quite prone to believe in "intervention by unseen forces in our fates," quickly volunteered his belief that the spirit of Forry had indeed intervened and saved our filming session by canceling his emergency alarm notification.

Paul Davids on the set at the Santa Fe Center for Contemporary Arts (CCA) that was used as the "Ship of the Afterlife" in The Life After Death Project.

Months later, Scot Johnson moved to Germany with his family to take a new job. His first day in his new home there, he put on his running shorts and running shoes and went out for a jog, looked up at a sign to see where he was and noticed that he was on Ackermanstrasse!

IV. Computers 2

Many very strange things happened with my computer and hard drives while at work on *The Life After Death Project*. This included a bizarre incident one night, up at the Big Bear Lake house we had used as a production office for editing. On that occasion, I saved the last file of the day at 5:17 in the morning. The file I saved was a Final Cut Pro timeline for the editing of the documentary-in-progress.

When I awoke and started working again at about 11 a.m., I discovered that an operation had been performed on my computer at 5:18 a.m., after I had left the room to retire after a very full day of work. I would describe the operation as follows: About 15 different video files of the interview of Mark Macy (one of

the expert witnesses in the film) had been recopied to two separate hard drives (half to one drive, half to the other).

I was very startled to see this, because I knew I had given no instructions for the computer to do this. And it had happened literally one minute after I completed working and left my office, as indicated by the time (5:18 a.m.) that the files were copied. They must have been copied as a group in one operation for all to have the same time indicated.

The strangeness was compounded by the fact that the duplicated video files (long files of many gigabytes) were all of Mark Macy, the primary expert on ITC or Instrumental Trans-Communication in the film.

At a time like that, I began to feel that someone unseen had taken control of my computer and hard drives.

On another occasion during editing of the documentary, I wanted to credit a certain friend of Forry's who provided Forry's phone messages that were used for the film. Forry always had unique phone messages. He had an answering machine that always provided specific information on the day and time of his next open house and directions to get to the Ackermansion. It was actually Michael Shearer who had recorded all of Forry's messages for many years and had saved them like a very devoted fan.

How did he come to provide them to me? Well, that in itself was a huge synchronicity of unlikely timing. I had visited the remodeled Ackermansion and spoken to the new tenants, asking permission to film there and interview them about the "ghosts" they had encountered in the house.

Just as I was leaving the Ackermansion, Mike Shearer happened to be walking by – just out for a stroll in the neighborhood. I did not recognize him, but he immediately recognized me as the producer/director of one of his favorite films: *The Sci-Fi Boys*.

We exchanged contact information then and there, and soon afterwards, he mailed me an audiotape with all of the Ackerman phone messages. This was definitely something I intended to include in the film. But when compiling the credits for the movie, I was very frustrated and embarrassed that I could not recall Mike's name. That stopped me in my tracks. I simply had to find it.

I searched for his name for over an hour and finally found it in an unexpected way. I had written it down on a sheet of paper that I had stuck into one of the binders of Forry's archives. I just happened to pick up one of the approximately fifteen binders of archives and that sheet of paper just happened to fall out onto the floor.

What are the odds of that happening? It just happened to fall to the floor

right when I needed it.

Within five minutes of finding his name and posting it in the end credits, I received an email from Facebook telling me that some person had posted a comment relating to Forry Ackerman on Facebook, and asking me: Did I wish to respond to it? I checked, and the post was three weeks old, but the Facebook notification came timed precisely with my finding the name – and the posting was from Michael Shearer!

The odd timing of the Facebook notification was utterly bizarre; especially since the Michael Shearer post it referred to was not new. It was weeks old. So why was I being prompted by Facebook via an email, right at that key moment, to pay attention to it immediately after I had unexpectedly solved my problem of having forgotten Michael Shearer's name?

It sounds like something that would happen in a dream, not real life. Life had begun to take on the dream-like characteristics of a virtual reality simulation. Someone once said that the universe at a cosmic level functions more like an immense thought than a gigantic machine. That had begun to seem quite accurate to me. I doubt even a good fiction writer could or would come up with things like this – things that seemingly show the universe interacting with me in rhythm to my thoughts rather than functioning as an independent mindless machine simply following "natural law."

In a fiction story, these incidents might be taken as poor writing, because they are too improbable to be believed! No one likes excessive coincidence in a good mystery story. However, none of this is fiction.

I have discussed elsewhere some of the other Instrumental Trans-Communication incidents of the Forry Ackerman case. That would certainly include the "Ackerman000" computer message to Michael Mac-Donald and Ian Johnston after Michael rapped on Forry's crypt, and the "Oh my God, no way!" response from their computer to their asking the question if Forry was really dead.

It would include the odd video glitches that showed up on the video files from both cameras that had been used to film the interview with author Mike Macy. It would include the red boxes and rectangles that just showed up at key moments in the video files Gary Schwartz emailed to me in which he documented his first informal attempts to contact "the spirit of Forry" in his lab using his computer. It would include the fact that both my computer and my Canon video camera (that uses tape, not a data chip) failed at the exact same moment while I was editing and dealing with the unexplained red boxes and rectangles.

It would also include Jack Kelleher's incidents in which Forry Ackerman showed up in a Google search regarding Fedoras, which is reminiscent of Forry's ruminations on death showing up for me in the Google search of the words "taken" and "sci-fi." The list would also include the exclamation mark that just appeared at the end of Jack Kelleher's article about Forry, on a line by itself after the end of his writing.

One evening I put my PC computer to sleep at night with just the home page showing. On the home page there were about fifty folders, none of them opened. When I came downstairs in the morning and proceeded to "awaken" my computer by wiggling the mouse, there was a large photo of Forrest J Ackerman together with director Joe Dante filling my screen. I did have that photo in one of my folders but I had not opened it. So why was it suddenly open, without me or anyone else physically having done something to make it happen?

This kind of thing has happened many times. Recall my earlier description of what happened the day the face mask of Forry moved about ten feet across the room, with the nose of the mask buried in the wires for my hard drives. I mentioned that my computer suddenly went down after that, shutting off on its own, which also shut down the auxiliary monitor that sits alongside my Mac on my desk.

When I rebooted the Mac, both the Mac screen and the auxiliary monitor showed different open folders filling the screen that had not been open before. Both folders were filled with files about Forrest J Ackerman and his magazine, *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. (Recall that I had seen the license plate AM LOVES FM just before coming home and finding that the mask had moved and then that the computer and monitor shut down.)

This is the photo of director Joe Dante shaking hands with Forry – the photo that filled Paul Davids' computer screen when he "woke up" the computer in the morning. Davids had not summoned this photo to show on his computer screen.

Here is one of the most shocking Instrumental Trans-Communication incidents that, for me, constitutes startling confirmation of intentional intervention from an unseen source, in real time, directly causing unexpected actions by my technological devices.

While preparing the final version of *The Life After Death Project* for broadcast, I instructed the Mac computer to create a high definition QuickTime file of the entire movie. This is a final key step to make the broadcast master. The required rendering time was about 12 hours. Input of the data from the Final Cut Pro timeline simultaneously came into the computer from about 10 different hard drives, to make this master file.

When the process was finished, I checked it immediately to confirm there were no glitches. It was fine at the beginning, but in fast forwarding to the end, I saw that there was no sound at all at the end of the documentary. There certainly should have been sound throughout, because I checked everything in my timeline of the Final Cut Pro software, and nothing whatsoever was out of place or missing.

I scanned through the QuickTime file to determine exactly where the soundtrack went silent. I felt as if I were going into a state of shock as I got the answer to my question. I discovered that the sound ended abruptly in a scene with Earl Roesel (who was present with Forry when he died). The sound failure occurred precisely when Earl Roesel mentioned the silence gesture in L. J. Dopp's painting of Forry. As you know, the painting showed a clock in the background at two minutes to midnight, the exact time Forry died, as Earl Roesel has confirmed for us.

The dropping out of all sound on the soundtrack occurred exactly, to the very frame, when Earl discussed the silence gesture. And the sound was gone from that moment to the very end of the film.

When this incident occurred, I explained it to Hollace. She said: "You can fix it, can't you? You can make it work on the next try?"

I countered that there was nothing to fix. There was nothing at all that I could touch or change to deliberately create a correct result, because nothing was out of order or missing in my timeline of data.

This is what I would call a "Self-Referential Instrumental Trans-

Communication (SRITC),” because the very anomaly reveals what seems to be a very specific awareness and deliberate intent. It is as though the error (the sudden absence of all sound) was selected to be a perfect match for the content of the film at that precise location.

Earl Roesel was talking about silence in a way that suggested the total silence of death. And voila! – the master QuickTime file gives us… silence… from that split second onward to the end.

To understand the unlikelihood of something like that occurring by chance, you have to begin by realizing that there are about 200,000 frames in the film, so there was one chance in 200,000 the problem would have occurred precisely there, if that specific problem was to occur at all. (It never had occurred before!) However, there also had to be a reason for the problem, and there was none discernible to me in any way. No glitch that made this happen could be detected anywhere in the system!

I reviewed all the video and audio files that Final Cut Pro was using from my hard drives. As I had explained to Hollace, all of the computer data and hard drive data were perfect. In fact, when I made the QuickTime file again soon thereafter, without correcting anything, the QuickTime file turned out perfectly the next time after twelve hours of rendering time – there was no sound dropout at all.

How is it possible that something like this can just happen without reflecting a deliberate action to send me a sign?

In other words, the synchronicity was so exact – so precise – it had the precision of landing a Mars rover at a specific place on the red planet millions of miles away. It demonstrates determined agenticity by unseen, non-physical forces…the very thing skeptics such as Dr. Michael Shermer will tell you cannot possibly happen. No external agenticity exists in this cold, dead universe – that is chapter and verse of the debunker’s philosophy. Eventually, Michael Shermer had something just as improbable happen to him, with similar remarkable timing, as you will discover in Chapter 18.

V. Another Cryptic Visit

The extraordinary “silent file incident” was followed within a few weeks by another incident at Forry’s crypt, but first I must provide the background.

I was preparing DVD bonus features. One of those features was Ray Bradbury’s talk at the Ackerman tribute from March of 2009 at the Egyptian Theater in Hollywood. Ray Bradbury gave a very moving and loving and

poignant talk, expressing appreciation and admiration for Forry. He spoke about how Forry was the spark that ignited his career – the first to publish one of his stories, and his first agent. Forry even loaned him bus fare to travel cross country to the first World Science Fiction Convention in New York in 1939. When they were at that convention together, Forry hyped Ray Bradbury's talents to many publishers, introducing his friend to everyone. At the tribute, Ray Bradbury had a profound sadness in his voice, and he let everyone know how much Forry would be missed.

I had the Bradbury talk on only one of my hard drives, an eight terabyte G-Raid. Further, I had gone to a great deal of work to put English subtitles on it. Even though Ray Bradbury had of course spoken in English, the subtitles were helpful because the recording of his voice had been very substandard. It was hard to make out some of his words. I wanted people to be able to read while watching to be certain they did not miss anything.

I did a QuickTime output of the Ray Bradbury material and turned it over to the post-production house (CCI in Burbank) that was preparing the DVD master, including the master for the bonus materials. Soon afterwards, however, the eight terabyte hard drive suddenly failed, and I lost the master files on that drive of the Bradbury talk and subtitles. I was very upset, of course, but I didn't panic because I knew that CCI had a duplicate output file, but my sense of security was ill-founded. I soon received a very distressing call from CCI informing me, regretfully, that there was a technical problem with my output file of the Bradbury talk. They said I would have to go back to the source and output it again.

This was a disaster. I could not output it again!

The hard drive with that material had failed and would not boot up! And very foolishly, I had not taken care to back it up onto another hard drive. That was very unlike me. Usually I back everything up, but in this case it was on my "to do" list but hadn't been done.

I took the failed hard drive to Melrose Mac, a company that rescues data from hard drives that no longer function. First, they tried to boot up my drive. It did not boot up for them, either. It failed repeatedly, and they told me it would take them ten days to diagnose the problem, and if the data could be saved, it would cost me possibly around two thousand dollars (because there were so many terabytes of data on the drive), and it would take about a month!

I was in shock.

The master for the DVD bonus features had to be finished in days. I did not have a month.

This would drastically delay completing the DVD. I had hoped to have the DVDs available soon after the film was broadcast on the Syfy channel. Otherwise, I would have to eliminate Ray Bradbury's personal tribute to Forry, which I certainly did not want to do.

It happened that Russell Maynor had come back to Los Angeles from Albuquerque right at the same time this disaster was unfolding. I suggested we go up to Forry's crypt at Forest Lawn Glendale and pay our respects again.

I knew it seemed crazy, but I felt inwardly that Forry's spirit was the only one who could help me. Forry would certainly not be happy if the DVD were to be released without Ray Bradbury's speech from his tribute. So I decided to ask him for help.

Standing in front of Forry's crypt, I tried succinctly to explain the problem and ask him for any possible help. I told him, in a voice full of contrition, frustration and sadness, that I simply did not know what to do. I was desperate.

Now this is another of those parts where I have to say "So help me God," because what follows is so unbelievable to our rational minds. Russell Maynor is a living witness to this. We left the crypt, and I began to drive away, but my vehicle was still on Forest Lawn Glendale property – in fact, I had hardly driven for more than two minutes when suddenly my cell phone rang in the car.

It was Melrose Mac calling saying: "You can come and pick up your hard drive."

I at first reacted with dismay because that could only mean one thing – they were not going to be able to fix it or salvage any data. I asked for clarification. "What do you mean I can pick it up? Have you looked at it again?"

They said they couldn't explain it, but they had tried to boot it up again, and suddenly the hard drive worked. They said all the data was there, and that I should pick it up, take it home and transfer all the data to another hard drive for safety backup. They described one minor adjustment they made that cost less than the one hundred dollar deposit I had put down.

Without delay, I drove right over to Melrose Mac, with Russell Maynor alongside me. I had experienced the miracle of the hard drive working again. It was like a resurrection, in the technological sense. And it happened on that very day I had dropped it off for repair – the very day I had been told that it would take about a month and cost about two thousand dollars, if it could be saved at all, which was not likely.

Needless to say, I completed the corrected output of the Ray Bradbury footage that day and immediately delivered it to CCI, and there was no further problem connected with it.

When you add that anomaly to all the others that happened, how is it possible to deny the obvious? I simply had to conclude that some unseen power was interacting with me, again and again, using my technological devices.

I will reiterate once again that in Chapter 18, you will see that the same kind of technological resurrection happened to the Executive Director of the Skeptics Society, Dr. Michael Shermer, and shook his skepticism to the very core. I'll keep you in a bit of suspense for the details.

VI. Marilyn!

Another ITC incident happened when I went to visit an art gallery for "The Messenger Collection" in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I visited Sue and Abel Roderick, owners of the gallery with whom I had business to conduct. They began by showing me many treasures, beginning with four of the most important oil paintings in the Messenger Collection.

One of them was of the Chicago World's Fair of 1933, which led me to remark that Forrest J Ackerman had attended (with his friend, the then unknown author, Ray Bradbury) the 1939 New York World's Fair in New York. Other key paintings were of a beautiful woman in red, a bobcat, and some World War II ships from a "Victory at Sea" campaign during the war.

Next they unveiled their greatest treasures: the original color separation negatives of the most famous calendar photo of Marilyn Monroe. They had in their possession the twenty-one original, hand-retouched color negatives that were used to alter the Marilyn images in various ways back in the 1950's. Through these alterations, the same image of Marilyn had her completely nude in the original shot, wearing pasties in another, lace in another, *etc*. In the days long before the invention of Photoshop, changing images directly on original negatives in that way required meticulous artistic work, and these negatives were historic.

Valuing these negatives in the millions of dollars, and hopeful that I might in some way be able to call them to the attention of a potential buyer, they spent time unveiling and explaining each one. The Rodericks were aware of the strange things that had been happening to me since March of 2009, and I remarked how much Forry would have loved those images of Marilyn Monroe, if he had been with us to appreciate them. In fact, when he lived in the 18-room Ackermansion, he used to have a framed print of that nude Marilyn pose in his master bedroom suite.

In retrospect, I feel as though that remark (and the remarks about the

World's Fair) may have functioned as a kind of trigger to precipitate an incident, much like the off-color joke I told at the party at my house seemed to have triggered the Huichol mask flying off the wall and landing at my feet.

I asked if I could use my iPhone to take a couple photos of the Marilyn negatives, and they agreed. When I pressed the camera icon on my phone, I suddenly remembered that the last photos I had taken were of my original art that I had just completed in my Santa Fe house (where the inkblot incident happened).

I pressed my camera roll button so I could show them that art, and to my astonishment, the latest picture on the camera roll was of a postcard for the Roderick's Messenger Collection that showed the four paintings they had presented to me: the World's Fair of 1933, the lady in red, the bobcat, and the World War II ships.

The
Messenger
Art Collection
Begun in 1913 by Frank Messenger, this diverse collection was purchased by a new owner in 2010. Consisting of more than 6,000 works of art, selections from this epic American collection are now on view for the public.
We are pleased to announce that
many of these treasures are now offered for sale.
Please contact us for more information.

This image – promotional art of the four paintings Paul had just been looking at in the Messenger Art Gallery – showed up mysteriously on Paul Davids' iPhone.

I was in shock when I saw this on my iPhone, because I knew that the last time I had used the camera feature was about an hour before to shoot pictures of my art. I had never taken a photo of that postcard of their four paintings, and in fact they had no copy of that advertisement postcard in their gallery. They told

me that they did have that image at their website, but I had not looked at or examined the art photos at their site that day – and certainly not since photographing my own art. In fact, I am quite sure I had never studied the art at their website or seen images of any of those paintings previously.

So how did that image of the very paintings we had just been looking at end up as the latest entry on my camera roll? The mystery, which impressed the Rodericks too, led me to call Gary Schwartz without delay, and both Sue Roderick and I explained the incident to Gary. Gary took it all in but informed us that there is a way that one can download a website photo to one's camera roll, that it is not difficult to do.

I did not know how to do it at the time, but subsequently my son demonstrated it for me. This did not reduce the effect of the mystery, however, because I had not deliberately downloaded the image after photographing my own art about an hour before. And I couldn't imagine having downloaded it accidentally, without even knowing how.

I was left to wonder: Was this another ITC intervention?

The next apparent ITC incident that I recall happened to an author/critic named Robert Egby, who had seen my film as a work in progress. He had written a lengthy blog post at that time, using the headline: 'SPIRIT DELETES FOUR WORDS – PROPELS FILM INTO PRODUCTION."

After the DVD came out, I was very surprised to receive the following email from him:

Hi Paul: Your movie arrived yesterday from Amazon on DVD and we watched the first disk last night – what a great show! What a difference from the Taos cut two years back. This one really moves along and the last 30 minutes with the science lab session is perfect. I'll write a review on Amazon in the next day or so.

You won't believe this. I watched it with my partner Betty Lou. When we finished Betty Lou flipped her smart phone to check her email and accidentally hit the GPS button. She gasped and showed me the street map – clear as a bell. "ACKERMAN ROAD." It floored us and we are used to having spirits around. It's a road on Pillar Point about ten miles away just outside Watertown NY. There was no reason for it to come up. The energy around you and your project is weird!!!! And fun!!!

Take care.

Robert Egby

16. VERY ODD ODDS-AND-ENDS

I. Hero of Rue Morgue

I call this chapter **Very Odd Odds-and-Ends** because these are the incidents I don't quite know how to place. They are the potpourri of leftovers – challenges to my mind that refuse to be omitted or forgotten, and yet these are difficult to present in a precise order of timeline.

I'll begin this by stating that as I write these words, today is May 24, 2014, and Hollace and I are up at the Big Bear Lake house once again for Memorial Day. We were here last weekend, and I was seated in this very same black office chair with my computer atop the round oak table, and last weekend I wrote most of the chapter about Sean Fernald. This is the same room where some of the editing work on *The Life After Death Project* took place – the room where Sean received notification of a Facebook message from Michael MacDonald which was never sent – the room where my computer showed the red rectangles and other geometric shapes covering the data from Gary Schwartz' spirit communications – the room where my video camera and computer stopped working simultaneously as I edited material from Gary and the digitally corrupted files of the interview of Mark Macy. This is the room where files of the Mark Macy interview copied themselves onto a backup hard drive after I had turned in to go to sleep at five in the morning. I never gave the command for the computer to do that.

This is also where Sean explained to Hollace and me the significance of the Las Rocas de San Alejandro wine of 2004. And in front of this house, the sculpture of the white whale somehow vanished from the back of Hollace's car. Even though it is now five years and two months after the mysterious ink obliteration occurred, there are still unexplained events occurring at unpredictable times, and the latest one was last weekend in this room.

The room, with its raised, beamed ceiling and wood paneled walls, has two closets that do not quite reach the ceiling, and we have filled the space above the

closets with a television and two reminders of Forrest J Ackerman, two pieces of memorabilia from his estate auction of early May, 2009. Those items are a large framed photo of Forry Ackerman smiling and sitting in the prop of the time machine from the George Pal 1960 film *The Time Machine* and a framed cover of *Rue Morgue* Magazine with Forry's face on the cover. It is a very special cover, and this item, measuring 18 by 24 inches, is personally autographed by many from the staff of *Rue Morgue*. I cannot read all of their names, but these are some of the inscriptions, all seemingly made with the same silver, felt-tipped pen:

> FORRY! ALL I CAN SAY IS THANK YOU! FOR ALL THE SPOOKY DREAMS. WE LOVE YOU. JESSA.
>
> THANKS FOR MAKING US ALL MONSTER KIDS. WE LOVE YA! DAVE
>
> DEAR FORREST, YOU HAVE CHANGED MY LIFE FOREVER. I BECAME A MONSTER KID BECAUSE OF YOU, GHOULISHLY YOURS (Illegible signature)
>
> FORREST, YOU WILL ALWAYS BE AN INSPIRATION, THANK YOU! (Illegible signature)
>
> THANK YOU, FORRY, FOR EVERYTHING (Illegible signature)
>
> UNCLE FORRY, YOU'RE MY HERO. JOVANKA
>
> DEAR FORREST, YOU ARE WITHOUT EQUAL. YOU CHANGED THE LIVES OF A GENERATION AND WILL FOREVER LIVE ON IN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE MONSTER KIDS (Illegible signature)

Above the title of the magazine, *Rue Morgue*, are the words: "Horror in Culture & Entertainment." And the first item on the list of contents on the left side of the cover is: 50 YEARS OF FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND WITH FORREST J ACKERMAN

Both frames of the pictures above the closet are made of four thin metal strips that pinch tightly against the clear plastic that is covering the photos and the cardboard backing material. Those metal strips are tightly in place. They do

not slide on their own. They do not work their way loose on their own, and no one touches them – you need a footstool or step ladder to reach them above that closet.

Both frames were exactly as they should be – nothing out of the ordinary – as I finished the chapter about Sean Fernald asking Forry for a sign (the spider bite), and then I went into the nearby kitchen for lunch. When I returned to this room, what immediately caught my eye is that one of the four metal strips on the *Rue Morgue* cover was completely ajar, at an angle.

I immediately sensed another incident had just occurred. I took a photo and got a step ladder and climbed up so I could return the out-of-place part of the frame to its upright position. There was no question: it was pinched tight. It was not loose. Once I pushed it back, I wanted to see how much effort was needed to pull it back to the angle. It required effort – a deliberate physical pull.

Who did it? It could not have happened without intervention, without a deliberate action. It would have taken more force than a mouse could deliver, and there are no animals in the house. Also, I checked the top of the closet for mouse droppings and there were none. We use an electronic device that produces a sound out of range of human hearing that keeps mice away.

The black, narrow left side of the metal frame of the Rue Morgue *cover suddenly leans to the left by itself in May, 2014. Alongside the* Rue Morgue *cover is a photo of Forry sitting in the time machine prop from George Pal's film,* The Time Machine.

As a result of the frame incident, I paid special attention to that *Rue Morgue* cover. If it had not happened, those beautiful inscriptions to Forry would not have become part of this book. The inscriptions are evidence of how much he was loved and appreciated by so many, one of whom declared that Forry

changed the lives of a generation (which I agree with entirely). Was the out-of-kilter frame another instance of Forry tweaking physical reality in order to get attention and get his way?

II. The Fireplace Fires Up

A few weeks before this, I was at the home of my massage therapist, Eva, preparing to receive a massage. I discussed the writing of this book with her, and my excitement that I was making excellent progress writing my chapters. She had heard me discuss the Forry incidents many times. She made the comment that she felt his presence, plus the presence of Ray Bradbury.

She often said she was a "sensitive" about such things and was very comfortable sharing stories of people who have had other-worldly experiences – and she's had a few of her own. I had climbed onto the massage table, and she asked me if I wanted the gas fireplace on or off. I said, "Let's have it on." As she explained to me moments later, lighting that gas fireplace is a two-step process. First you turn on the gas, and then you hold a flame up to it to start the fire. That day, at that moment, she turned on the gas and the fire immediately started by itself.

She did not have time to strike a match and hold it in place – the fire was already in full blaze. What did it feel like? We both had the same reaction – as if someone unseen had said "at your service" and done Eva the favor of saving her the effort of lighting a match. It felt much the way it did when the Huichol mask popped off the wall with perfect timing for the punchline of my joke.

My skeptical side is alive in me still, and the next day I put in a call to Dr. Jay Siegel to describe what had happened and to ask him what could possibly be a logical explanation for it. Dr. Siegel said that perhaps the fireplace had not been shut off entirely the last time it was used. Perhaps there was still a tiny, unseen flame of gas still burning, almost like a pilot light, which lit the fire in the gas fireplace when Eva turned on the gas.

As an experiment, the next time I saw Eva, we tried it. We tried to turn off the gas in such a way that a small remnant of flame would still be ignited. We absolutely could not do it. And Eva insists that this has never happened in all the years she and her mother have lived together in that apartment. Never once – except that day we talked about Forry and Ray Bradbury – had the fire lit by itself the moment she turned the gas knob.

III. Ian Johnston's Treasures from Ontario

In June of 2013, I was flown to Toronto by Zoomer Media to attend and be a speaker at the annual IdeaCity conference hosted by Canadian media magnate Moses Znaimer. Every year, Moses assembles a group of speakers, who give short talks (in this case limited to 17 minutes) on a variety of topics in a style similar to the TED conferences. The name of the conference in 2013 was "A Gaggle of Geeks." The concept was to assemble a group of experts in various unusual fields, people who would jokingly be referred to as "geeks" by the masses.

The topics were about breakthroughs in science and the environment. There were speakers who talked about how functioning bicycles had been constructed entirely of hardened cardboard at a cost of less than fifteen dollars per bike; how in China gigantic skyscrapers had been assembled from beginning to completion in a matter of weeks; how real leather is now being grown in laboratories so in the future leather shoes and jackets won't require the slaughtering of animals; how underground cities are being planned in the shape of immense pyramids that descend deep into the earth coming to a point far underground. I was scheduled in a more esoteric segment of the conference that included experts on quantum computers and how science is proving the existence of parallel universes.

My topic was *The Life After Death Project*, and I introduced a full house at Koerner Hall, at the University of Toronto, to the unique life and afterlife of my mentor Forrest J Ackerman. My IdeaCity talk is now online at Youtube courtesy of Zoomer Media, and can be seen at this link: (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mK71M6C_RUg)

I invited Ian Paul Johnston to attend my talk at IdeaCity, since he lived nearby in Toronto, and he had intense memories of the day he and Michael MacDonald visited (and rapped on) Forry's crypt. The next day I visited Ian at his home, a three-room apartment, resembling a large college dorm room. It had a bedroom, a bathroom, and another room for everything else.

Ian had surprised me with his story of a visit to a used bookstore in his hometown of London, Ontario, and I came over to see the treasures he had acquired. Again, Ian had experienced a highly improbable incident. He had happened to wander into a used bookstore – almost a year to the day after Ackerman's death – in search of a Christmas gift.

Though he had shopped at this store in his youth, he had moved to Toronto, so he had not been to the bookstore in a decade. He had not been back to Ontario very often.

Entering the bookstore, he was drawn toward the back where he nearly tripped over a cardboard box on the floor. Scrawled on the side in ink from a black marker were the words “Sci-Fi Memorabilia – $49.99.” The price, of course, was in Canadian dollars, which at that time were fractionally more valuable than U.S. dollars. In any event, it was a collector’s bargain of the century.

The box offered the collected business documents of notable Canadian bookseller Sam McCoy, a member of one of Canada’s earliest Sci-Fi clubs – The Canadian Science Fiction Association (founded in 1948). Covering nearly 50 years, the box was chock full of programs, flyers and various documents associated with every notable sci-fi convention dating back to the first – the 1939 World Science Fiction Convention in New York, which Forry had attended with Ray Bradbury.

To say that Forrest J Ackerman was a prominent part of this box of memorabilia would be an understatement. There were convention photos of Ackerman, program advertisements taken out by Ackerman touting his latest ventures or those of Warren Publishing, and even an autographed issue of *Famous Monsters* signed by Forry. In all, it covered 1939 until almost 1990.

Ian had wanted to ask the bookstore manager the history of the box but decided against it. $49.99 seemed like a steal. He didn’t want to start to ask prying questions and then find he had unwittingly encouraged the bookstore manager to raise the price.

This incident was unusual, but was it any more bizarre than Forry’s ring (that Bela Lugosi had worn while playing Dracula) showing up in a gallery window about a hundred feet away from Ian’s partner’s home (Michael MacDonald) in Halifax, Canada?

Ian also showed me a series of Ackerman documents he had acquired from Forry’s friend, filmmaker Tim Sullivan. The pages included everything from edited pages of *Famous Monsters*, to a request from a publisher for Forry to write 200 vampire jokes for a dollar each. (Forry protested the low pay but he did write the jokes – which were all there.) There was also early correspondence from *Famous Monsters* publisher James Warren asking Forry to write an article for another publication, and James Warren wanted it filled with puns and word play. This showed that puns and word play had become a major part of Forry’s writing style, an identifying part of his style even early in his career.

I thoroughly went through the letters and manuscripts that day, reading everything. One page really caught my eye. It was a page of a list of horror, science fiction and action movies, all beginning with the letter “T” and written

by Forry in all capital letters. There was one entry obviously out of place and written in upper-lower script for a film called *Planet Earth* and dated 6/27/74. It was crossed out, along with the date. There is something else after the word *Earth* that we cannot read because Forry blacked it out more thoroughly than the words *Planet Earth* and the date.

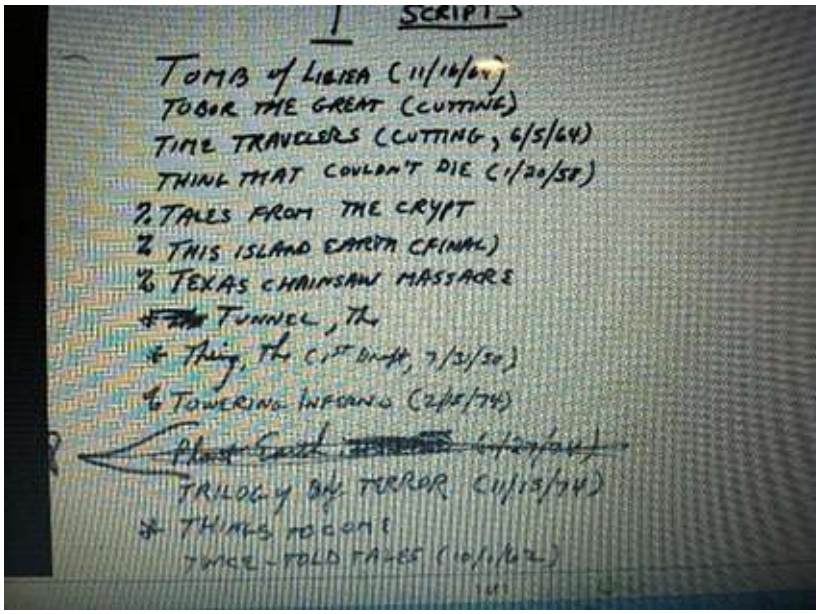
In other words, this is an historic example of a Forry manuscript (or list, in this case) that shows something edited out in two levels of opaqueness, just like in my ink obliteration document with "Spoke to Joe Amodei."

As you recall, "Spoke to" is more lightly obliterated than "Joe Amodei," which cannot be read at all. This is just like here in this example from the Forry papers that Ian Johnston had in Toronto, in which the word or words after *Planet Earth* have been vigorously blacked out and cannot be read. It is curious, factual evidence that sometimes Forry did black out a line with two different intensities of darkness.

It shows that Forry had two editing styles – one more passive and normal, the line through the word, and the other fiery, intentional and determined: the total blackout. Ye shall not read those words, ye who trespass there!

IV. Cat Balls for Cat Ghosts

While at Ian's house, I nearly tripped on a small, green, plastic cat ball. Ian said, "Oh, watch out for that! By the way, that just showed up this morning." My curiosity leaped to full throttle. He explained that he had had a pet cat that died – a cat that he had named Forrest J Ackerman.



Forest J Ackerman edited a line in this document with two levels of opacity, scratching out a line and then making part of that line indecipherable. This is PROOF that he had done it before – blacking out a line with two separate degrees of darkness, just like the ink obliteration of Paul's document. The "suspect" here provides yet another clue to his identity.

He said that when the cat passed away (it had a short, sad life), he had thrown away all the toy cat balls in his apartment. It would not have been difficult to find the balls, since as I explained the apartment had only a single bedroom and one bathroom and one single room for everything else, which served as a combination living room, kitchen and dining room

Furthermore, Ian explained that one day they had had a flood, with an inch or two of water covering the whole apartment floor. There had been a thorough cleaning process, and he certainly didn't leave any toy cat balls around after the deluge. Nevertheless, Ian insisted that four times since kitty Forrest had died, toy cat balls had shown up – and the latest one had been that morning, the morning of my arrival.

Ian, who had been quite a skeptic until that day in 2009 when they had received their computer messages from Forry after their crypt visit, explained that he was now quite convinced that the ghost of Forrest J Ackerman the Cat was visiting him regularly. Cat Forrest had always loved those cat balls – even fetching them repeatedly – so why not?

Ian said that sometimes he could feel the cat jump up on his bed at night the way it used to do when it was alive. I challenged him: couldn't he have been

asleep and dreaming of the cat jumping up on the bed, and then waking up? No, no, he insisted, he was sure he had been awake several times when the invisible cat had leaped onto the bed. No doubt about it in his mind.

I suggested an experiment regarding the green toy cat ball. I said, “Let’s put it over here in this exact spot on the kitchen floor. Leave it there overnight. See if that’s where it is in the morning.”

Ian agreed but told me he wouldn’t be sleeping in his apartment that night, because he had offered to house sit for a friend.

We left the cat ball on the floor near the sink, and we departed his apartment together. He locked the door behind us. He was en route to a baseball game. Playing in an adult league was one of his favorite pastimes. He didn’t intend to return to his apartment until morning.

I was en route to visit Reg Hartt, who ran what he called a Cineforum in Toronto, showing rare and unusual films in a small theater in his home. Reg had run into trouble with Toronto authorities who accused him of running a business without a license, and they had taken him to court and attempted to fine him. As I understand it, Reg won the argument and still shows films to audiences of about fifteen or twenty in his home. I wanted to see him, knowing that he was a fan of *The Sci-Fi Boys*, and he had sent me several “Reg Hartt presents *Metropolis*” t-shirts as a gift. Reg was a believer in the Forry afterlife phenomena, and I agreed he could show *The Life After Death Project*, which he scheduled for the Christmas holidays.

Soon after my visit to Ian Johnston’s home, with the toy cat ball incident and my investigation of all the Forry documents that Ian had delightfully hoarded, I subsequently received an email from Ian telling me that the cat ball had disappeared that night. It was not in his apartment when he had returned the next morning. To this day, other toy cat balls of different colors keep showing up in Ian’s apartment.

V. Ceiling Fans Sending Messages

Another series of incidents involved our remodeled kitchen. About three years ago, Hollace and I embarked on a major construction project at our home in Los Angeles. She had worked with an architect to design a large new kitchen that would be in the historic California bungalow style. The completed kitchen included two ceiling fans at opposite sides of the kitchen, each with its own light fixture. The fans were turned on by remote control. There were wireless controls for the fan and lights attached to the walls that could start the fan, determine the

speed of the fan, and switch the lights on and off.

We began to notice that the fans and/or lights would go on by themselves at various times. We might wake up in the morning and come downstairs to find one or the other fans on, or one or the other lights on. Sometimes the fans would be going at the highest speed, and sometimes more slowly. Of course, I postulated that there could be some signal passing through the atmosphere that was on the same frequency as our fan switches. However, if there was such a signal, it could not have been coming from a nearby house that had similar fans, because the signal strength from the fan switch does not travel that far. It would have had to be a signal from something else, for some other purpose that happened to be traveling through the atmosphere.

At a certain point, I began to wonder whether perhaps there was no simple explanation involving random signals passing through the kitchen. The issue was: why would it sometimes turn on one fan or the other, and then sometimes turn them both on at the same time? The signals coming from each switch are different. If that were not the case, then both of the fans or lights would turn on every time we were to touch either controller. Why would a random signal influence both of the lights or both fans at once?

I queried the contractor who had installed the fans and those kitchen fan lights, and I asked him if he had ever heard of this sort of thing happening anywhere else he had installed the same brand of fans. His answer was no, this was all new to him. He had never heard of such a thing.

I decided to do a little experiment. It is what Dr. Gary Schwartz calls “self-science” – an attempt to take a scientific approach and see what results would be obtained. I said to myself that perhaps this behavior of the fans was an Instrumental Trans-Communication effort from Forry. So I spoke aloud to Forry and suggested that, if he was responsible for these phenomena, we should assign specific meaning to one fan versus the other. I assigned one as the “good news fan” and the other as the “bad news fan.”

If Forry was aware of something good happening or about to happen, something we should get excited about, then he should turn on the fan near the breakfast nook. If this was major good news, he should turn on both the fan and its light. If something ominous were about to befall us or a family member, and if we should pay special attention to watch our backs because of some possible impending setback, he should turn on the fan by the laundry room.

And if it was major bad news about to befall us, or something we were doing of which he did not approve (such as “not a good time to buy that stock you’ve been thinking about,” or “could be a car accident on the road you’re

planning to take") then he should turn on both the fan and its light near the laundry room.

There had been incidents of both fans turning themselves on simultaneously. Obviously that would be a contradiction if it continued to happen. Why would good news and bad news ever be announced at the same moment? (Unless this were like the amiable friend who says to you, "well, there's good news and there's bad news, which would you like to hear first?")

Hollace and I both noted that the fans and their lights continued to come on at odd times after I explained to Forry's spirit how we could use this as a communication code. They never turned themselves off, only on. Sometimes they were on when we awoke and came downstairs into the kitchen for breakfast. Sometimes they would switch on during the day.

Although Gary asked me to keep a diary for scientific purposes to list when the fans came on and what happened in our lives around that time, I never did write it all down. I was not disciplined enough and was often too distracted by whatever else I was doing at the moment. I can simply say that Hollace and I both noticed that the behavior of the fans did tend to coincide with incidents of good and bad news, but I cannot state what percent of the time there was a correlation.

As an example, there was a day I was really excited because I had located a house that I thought could prove to be a brilliant investment. It was up for short sale – a nine thousand square foot mansion offered at an extraordinarily low price per square foot, located on a great street in a terrific area, up on Mount Washington in Los Angeles. It was really a rather crazy idea, now that I look back on it. At this stage of our lives, why would Hollace and I have needed a nine thousand square foot house? The lowest floor of that house was a formal ballroom! We have never thrown any balls and don't intend to! (It could have made a great art studio, though.)

Hollace and I got busy exploring whether we could afford it if we sold our house in order to move – and we were especially pleased to quickly learn that we did qualify for a mortgage for that huge house, and that the interest rate would be on good terms.

While I was in an effervescent and boisterous, great mood, dreaming about what we could do to fix up that mansion, I came into the kitchen and the bad news fan was on at full speed and so were the bad news lights.

I thought to myself, "Well, this disproves the communication. Forry, get with the program. Why don't you approve our plan? Why aren't you enthusiastic – that house would be bigger than the Ackermansion!"

The fan was right, and we were wrong. The real estate agent representing us soon told us that the preliminary title report had more red flags than any other deal she had ever seen. There were lawsuits against the owner, who had taken many loans against the house that had not been paid back, and these were loans from small capital groups, not major banks.

In a short sale, if the major mortgage were paid off at the time of closing, there could be still lawsuits coming at us for years because of the shady practices of the owner. The agent explained that probably no reputable insurer would even insure the house, given the title report. We also soon learned that it would have needed hundreds of thousands of dollars of work, and the termite report estimate was the most expensive our agent had ever seen.

That was the end of that deal.

Score one for the bad news kitchen fan!

Often, the fans and lights seemed to know more about what was really going on in our lives than we did.

At one point, the fans and lights stopped turning on for many weeks. I speculated to Hollace that perhaps the phenomenon was over. If it was attributable to Forry, maybe the communication had stopped and we would not be hearing from him anymore. No sooner did I make that comment than within hours the good news fan turned on full blast.

So was this Instrumental Trans-Communication?

I took delight every time something happened and never felt fear. However, I was reaching a point of near exhaustion by my sense of responsibility to be a documentarian of all of this. I had not only made *The Life After Death Project*, but I had also made a sequel called *The Life After Death Project 2 – Personal Encounters*. I was feeling ready to abandon my sense of duty to be a reporter of it all. Then along came those phone calls from Gary, rather insisting that we write a book about it. He insisted because (1) he said we owed it to science – scientists would never take documentary films as seriously as a book that they could peruse in an armchair, and (2) we owed it to Forry. He pointed out that given the exceptional lengths Forry had gone to in order to establish and maintain contact from the Other Side, it was our responsibility to honor his memory and his achievement by writing this book.

Fine and good. But of course, it took another few years to put it all down!

VI. The Clark Mystery at imdb.com

Here's another incident that brushes up against the borderlines of synchronicity and meaning. Imdb.com is the Internet Movie Database. It is the largest website in the world for information about actors, producers, directors, screenwriters and films. The films I have produced and directed have their own pages at imdb.com, filled with information about the movies including the full cast list. When *The Life After Death Project* was completed and had a broadcast date for Syfy, I prepared a page for the film that listed everyone in it.

One day about a year after the film came out, I went to imdb.com and noticed that there was an actor listed in my movie who was not in it. His name is Joel Clark Ackerman! It said that he played the role of Officer Rick Brown.

Well, no one played any roles in my film, it was a documentary with people appearing as themselves. There was no Officer Rick Brown.

My question was: Why would the name of an actor named Ackerman show up on our cast list when we never put it there? And it was very curious – exceptionally mysterious – that his middle name was Clark.

One of the controversies of Forry's life was whether his middle name was actually James or Clark. This was one of the oddities that medium Catherine Yunt had come up with during her reading, that there was a controversy about his middle name. In fact, I was in the best position of any to establish that his actual middle name was James, because Forry's birth certificate was one of the items in Forry's personal archives that I obtained at his estate auction. However, there exists a photo of Forry at four and a half years old with a label from the photographer (from approximately 1920) that has his middle name as Clark!

Hopefully you can appreciate why I found the addition of another Ackerman to our cast list at imdb.com to be so astounding. It wasn't just the fact of it being an Ackerman showing up where he didn't belong, but this Ackerman had that incredibly meaningful middle name of Clark!

Eventually I got in touch with Joel Clark Ackerman, who was as surprised as we were that he had been mysteriously added to our cast list. It turned out that he played Officer Rick Brown in a 2013 movie called *Life After Death*. The fact that he ended up posted as appearing in *The Life After Death Project* rather than *Life After Death* – and who posted it and why – remains a mystery. The error has since been corrected.

But perhaps it was no more of an error than the so-called "typographical errors" in *Fate* magazine that only served to highlight the ink obliteration in two levels of opacity!

Notice that this photo of four year old Forry, which was shown previously, has his middle name as Clark. This photo, you will recall, was the screen saver on Ian Paul Johnston's computer when the computer spoke to him after his visit to Forry's crypt, when the computer blurted out "Oh my God, no way!"

I recalled a 2011 film called *The Adjustment Bureau*, starring Matt Damon and Emily Blunt. The screenplay was by George Nolfi, based on a short story by Philip K. Dick called "Black Screen." The new concept of reality that had intruded upon my life – one could say taken over my life – was very similar to the premise of that film. In that story, beings in another dimension, who are akin to what we sometimes think of as angels, are constantly watching over the affairs of people, down to the tiniest details. When people take some course of action that isn't in tune with their fate, the Adjustment Bureau steps in to make adjustments – to fine-tune reality by changing things in our flesh-and-blood world of physical reality. If two future lovers were supposed to meet one another while they were walking down a specific street, and one of them took a wrong turn, the Adjustment Bureau could play with time and reality to correct the error, so that what is "supposed to happen" actually happens.

A screenshot of the imdb.com page for The Life After Death Project *showing the addition of Joel Clark Ackerman (who was not in the film) to the list of actual cast members. There was not any role of Officer Rick Brown in the film, either.*

I had come to feel that my "reality" was almost constantly being retuned by Forry's intervention, sometimes just to say "hello, I'm still here, I'm still watching, I'm still a part of it all." The latest episode involving Forrest Clark Ackerman was a good one! Especially for those of us who knew the significance of the name "Clark" in Forry's life. It was actually his nickname as a child.

VII. Monitored to Cause the Reaction "Wow!"

In another of these miscellaneous occurrences, there is a mystery regarding a birthday greeting from my childhood friend, Jeff Tinsley. Jeff and I filmed monster movies together when we were young teenagers and Jeff was a subscriber to *Famous Monsters*. I would always rush to his house when the latest issue came out, especially since my mother forbade me from having it. I have never thoroughly sorted it out, but for some reason my mother was convinced that Forry's magazine, and all monster and horror movies, were pure exploitation and represented the worst of capitalism – greedy producers and publishers with no values or concern for the morals of youngsters, out to make a buck and scare kids with movies and photos that gave them nightmares and

turned them into bed-wetters.

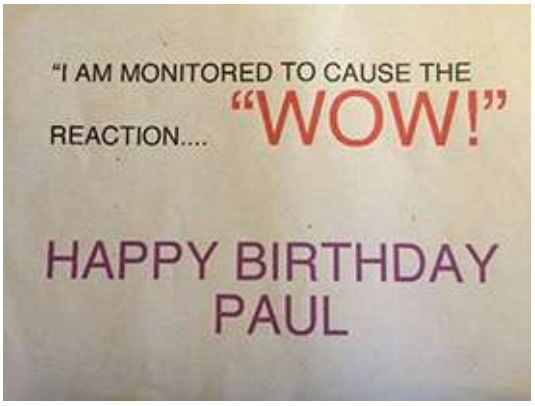
I do not think I wet my bed, and if I ever did, I am quite sure it had nothing to do with reading *Famous Monsters* – but there was no persuading my mother to the contrary.

Jeff made the film with me that won honorable mention in the *Famous Monsters* amateur filmmaking contest: *Siegfried Saves Metropolis*. We were both also fans of the 1956 MGM film *Forbidden Planet*, which featured Robby the Robot. We collected every Robby the Robot toy we could find. We both always recalled that Robby introduces himself in that film with the words: "I am monitored to respond to the name Robby."

Decades later, for one of my birthdays, Jeff gifted me a miniature Robby the Robot, and he accompanied it with a piece of paper printed from his computer in multi-colors that read: "I am monitored to cause the reaction…. 'WOW.' Happy birthday, Paul!"

I always kept the birthday wish in my home office in Los Angeles propped up on a bookshelf that has the miniature Robby. Around the time of my February 4th birthday in 2013, after I had learned that *The Life After Death Project* would be broadcast on Syfy in May, I was excitedly working to tie up loose ends to get the broadcast master ready. I awoke one morning, came downstairs, and there on the dining room table was the printed message from Jeff Tinsley: "I AM MONITORED TO CAUSE THE REACTION… "WOW!" HAPPY BIRTHDAY PAUL

How did it get there? I had not put it on the dining room table, and neither had my wife. I had left it in my office, right next to the miniature Robby, where it belonged. That was reminiscent of the time Forry's face mask moved of its own accord in my office.



This birthday greeting from Paul's friend who made the childhood monster movies with him is another object that inexplicably moved… from one room to

another.

VIII. The Moving Windowshade

Sometimes the objects that move seemingly have no connection to anything specific (such as the time the easel disappeared from the Santa Fe House and then showed up in a place where I already had looked for it).

Here's another incident in the same category. In the dining room of our Los Angeles house (where the Huichol mask popped off the wall), which I indicated before, on one wall there is a painting of Forry and his wife, Wendayne, which was one of his two favorite paintings of the two of them together.

Across from it are three windows that have window shades that pull down. When they are down and there are no lights on, the room is dark. One week Hollace and I were away on a trip and Elizabeth Baker had offered to house sit for us and take care of Tiger, our cat.

I have mentioned Elizabeth Baker (of Santa Fe) previously as someone who often had odd things occur in her own home: doors opening and shutting and locking and unlocking by themselves, the light in her garage repeatedly turning on by itself. When we returned from vacation, there was a note from Elizabeth explaining why one of the window shades was resting on a chair rather than being up on the window. It was the shade directly opposite the portrait of Forry and his wife, and its absence let light into the room and onto the portrait.

In her note, Elizabeth said that she didn't take the window shade down, and she didn't touch it. She said one morning she came downstairs and it was on the chair. She was staying in the house alone at the time. She didn't know how or why this happened.

Hollace and I have lived in that house since 1978. Never in that time has one of the window shades fallen by itself. I put the window shade back where it belonged, and as I did so, it was very clear to me that it cannot just fall. When it is in place, it is snapped into position with spring tension.

IX. Omen from a Falling Portrait?

While we're on the subject of things that should have stayed put on a window or wall, I must mention the portrait of me painted by L. J. Dopp, creator of the 2004 painting with the clock that predicted the time of Forry's death. I commissioned L. J. to paint a portrait of me and another one of my wife, and

after having them framed, I hung them both in a hallway in the Los Angeles house, above a china closet.

I pounded in the nail and picture hangers myself with a hammer and felt confident both were secure. This was shortly before my trip to hike the Grand Canyon in April of 2014 with my son, Scott. For over a year, we had planned the three-day hike which would take us from the rim at Bright Angel Trail down to the Colorado River and on to Phantom ranch to spend two nights. Then after a day of hiking at the bottom near the river, we would hike out the next day, an upward climb of 5,000 feet, taking about ten hours for the return trek.

Scott and I had accomplished the hike almost twenty-five years previously when he was a boy.

In 1995 I had attempted that hike again, all alone, and it had quickly ended in disaster about seven switchbacks down the Kaibab Trail where I had descended at that time. I had not been wearing proper footwear and slipped on the trail and fractured my left ankle in two places. They had lifted me out on a stretcher, and I underwent several hours of surgery in the hospital in Flagstaff. For several years I had a plate with ten screws on one side of the ankle and two long screws in the other side. Then in about 1998 I had the hardware removed.

Undertaking the Grand Canyon expedition again, at age 67, was a way of proving to myself that I was younger than my physical age, and that the canyon had not conquered me, that I had fully recovered and could still do it. (This in spite of having fractured the other ankle a few years ago after receiving the curious communique from medium Lisa Marie about “doctor….Rose…x-ray… garden.”)

I report all of this because the morning Scott and I were to depart on our trip to the Grand Canyon, I came downstairs and my portrait had fallen to the floor.

Hollace’s portrait remained where I had placed it, but the nail and picture hanger for my portrait had come loose, and there was a little hole with loose plaster in the wall.

While on the one hand I would like to say that mere superstition is something in which I do not indulge, this was different. With all of the movements of physical objects that had taken place in the house, I took this as a warning or bad omen. The previous autumn, I had had an experience of arrhythmia and had visited a heart specialist. Maybe the fallen portrait was a warning that I would not survive the Grand Canyon trip, that it would be too much for me – and that I should cancel it at the last minute.

Although I considered the fallen portrait as a warning from spirit, I refused

to be intimidated or frightened into changing my plans. But there was another thought in my mind from the fallen portrait, too. In *The Life After Death Project*, author and scientist Deborah Painter had reported on a portrait that had fallen off the wall in the house that became the Ackermansion. I made note of this previously – that when the house was owned by actor Jon Hall (star of the TV series *Ramar of The Jungle*) his portrait reportedly fell off the wall the day that he died, and it was the only painting that had fallen off a wall.

Forry and Wendayne bought the house after Jon Hall's passing. Therefore, within the context of the world of the Forry phenomena, I had another reason to regard the fallen portrait as an omen, and inspecting the plaster where I had nailed the picture hanger, I could not discern any reason for it to have broken loose.

Paul Davids' portrait by L. J. Dopp that fell off the wall. The flying saucer in the upper right is an homage to the fact that Paul was executive producer of the Showtime film, Roswell.

Nevertheless, Scott and I proceeded on the journey, and the canyon trip proved to be successful, up to a point. We hiked the twenty-five miles, but the last few miles of the return were immensely difficult for me. I felt that I had taxed myself to the outermost limits of my endurance. And that night, sleeping in a hotel room near the canyon rim, I did have another bout of arrhythmia that lasted hours. So the warning, if it was a warning, was not at all unfounded. Nevertheless, after recovering from the arrhythmia, I did feel that I increased my strength in making the trip.

X. iPads and Computers Peering at You

Here's another oddity for my odds and ends:

In the aftermath of the reports about NSA spying on American citizens and the top secret reports released by the fugitive and renegade, former NSA employee Edward Snowden, someone cautioned me that the cameras on our computers and iPads can be used to spy on us. The concern is that persons unknown can switch on the cameras to watch you and peer into the rooms you inhabit. Thus, I decided to put a piece of black duct tape covering the camera lens on my iPad and also on my home computer.

One evening when alone in our Santa Fe house, I specifically checked the iPad to be sure that the tape I had placed on the camera lens was still there. It was, and it was firmly in place. When I awoke in the morning, the tape was gone. It was a moment of total shock similar to what I felt when I first discovered the ink obliteration.

I questioned my own sanity and memory. Was it possible, I asked myself, that I only thought that I had checked for the tape the night before and I never really did? I rejected that. It seemed impossible. The memory of checking it was very clear. I asked myself, was there a possibility that, after checking it, I inadvertently, without paying any attention, peeled the tape off myself and tossed it in the trash? Sometimes the mind can get so preoccupied it is theoretically possible for something like that to happen.

I then decided to look for the tape that had been removed from the iPad. I checked every trash can in the house. I even went into the trash, pulling apart things that were mashed together or stuck together, examining everything. There was no small piece of wadded up black duct tape anywhere. So the piece of tape truly had vanished.

A couple weeks later, I was back in Los Angeles, and almost the same thing happened again. I had put gray duct tape over the camera lens of my laptop

computer. I had checked it at night. This time, in the morning the duct tape had been removed from the lens but it was not missing – it had been stuck, obviously and deliberately, to the leather case of the iPad which was lying alongside the computer.

I don't know what the moral of that story is. The message may be: someone is seeing or paying attention to everything I do. I don't think that it's the National Security Agency!

There have also been several times that dimmer switches turned off by themselves when I was in a room. Very odd. I checked the switch each time and confirmed it had been pushed down into the locked-off position. The light that had been on a moment before was turned off, and there was nothing wrong with the fixture or bulb. It seemed as if it would have required "the hand of a ghost."

XI. Falling Monsters

As you can imagine, and as you know from this book, following Forry's death, I collected whatever stories or reports there were from others. There was one I could never confirm but which was very curious. L. J. Dopp told me about one of Forry's admirers who collected miniature models of monsters of the type that have been sold as Aurora plastic kits. L. J. said that this Forry fan had told him his story but refused to talk to me or anyone else about it, determined not to go public and insisting on keeping his incident as his own private message. Reportedly, when Forry died, the plastic models of the Wolfman, Frankenstein, Dracula, the Creature from the Black Lagoon and other movie monsters, spontaneously fell from their shelves or were just knocked over one by one by some unseen force. As he checked on one that had fallen, another fell, then another and another like geese dropping from the sky from the bullets of a hunter. He broke down and sobbed.

XII. Shattered Shower Door and Fifties Fears

Monsters falling are of course easily interpreted as being within Forry's domain of influence. Less certain would be the near explosion of our tempered glass shower door at about two in the morning. With no discernable cause, the door shattered into thousands of pieces, leaving a huge pile of glass shards both in the shower stall and on the bathroom tile floor. This happened in September of 2015, soon after my iPod began spontaneously playing the music of *The*

Phantom of the Opera, and after the notary I randomly chose in Pasadena revealed her in-depth, personal knowledge of Forrest J Ackerman. There were no local earthquakes, and there was no evidence of the house settling. Everything was normal and tranquil except for the spectacularly shattered shower door.

The Davids' tempered glass shower door inexplicably exploded into thousands of tiny pieces in the middle of the night.

As far as I can recall at this time, the foregoing constitutes the bulk of the anomalous "Forry-related" incidents that began occurring in March of 2009, after the four words "Spoke to Joe Amodei" were obliterated from my document, continuing up until the events leading up to our return to the Ackermansion (for intensive research) in May, 2015.

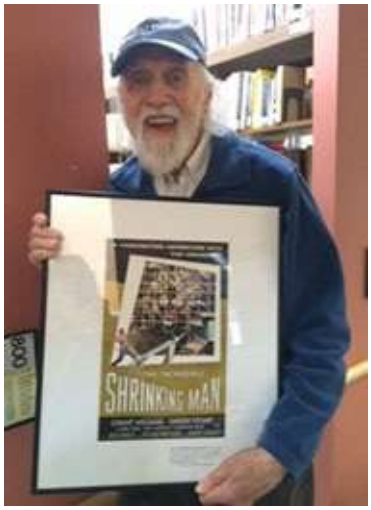
Interestingly, in typing these works, my fingers made a "Freudian slip" and I typed the words "Spook to Joe Amodei." I've just corrected it. Whoever he may be, my hat is off to the spook.

Speaking of typographical errors, Freudian and otherwise, every book requires an army of proofreaders, and this book has been no exception. One of those who volunteered is Stanislav O'Jack, Ph.D., a remarkable psychologist who has made many studies of paranormal phenomena. Dr. O'Jack is now in his 80s, and he lives in Rock Springs, Wyoming, with his wife, Helen. It is a town of 23,000 people where he has lived since 1988.

Never in the past twenty-seven years had Forrest J Ackerman come to Dr.

O’Jack’s attention until he met me, and for that matter, Forry can certainly be assumed to have been almost entirely unknown up in Wyoming’s rural Rock Springs. However, to add one more stunning synchronicity to our very long list, as Dr. O’Jack reached the half-way point in proofreading *An Atheist in Heaven*, he opened the local newspaper, *The Rocket Miner*, and he saw an article about a science fiction exhibit, courtesy of the Forrest J Ackerman Collection of the University of Wyoming. The exhibit had just come to town at the Hay Library at Western Wyoming Community College, a stone’s throw from where Dr. O’Jack lives. The traveling exhibit is called *Terror in the Theater: Fifties Fears*. It consists of movie posters of some of the most terrifying science fiction and horror films in the 1950s – posters that were once part of Forry’s great collection in the Ackermansion. What are the odds that this would become the big event in Dr. O’Jack’s home town right as Dr. O’Jack was dotting some “i’s” and crossing “t’s” for this book?

It is very reminiscent of the time Forry’s Dracula ring made a cross continental trip from Los Angeles to Halifax.



Stanislav O’Jack holds a poster of The Incredible Shrinking Man, *screenplay written by Forry’s friend Richard Matheson. The surprise traveling exhibit of posters of the Ackerman Collection made the newspaper of Stanislav’s town, Rock Springs, Wyoming, just as Stanislav was proofreading* An Atheist in Heaven.

XIII. Playing Poker with a Ghost

There is another to tell you about, documented in the sequel *The Life After*

Death Project 2 – Personal Encounters (which by the way includes a personal appearance by Stanislav O'Jack to tell about psychic photographs he takes with the lens cap on the camera).

While working on the film, I was invited by some ghost hunters in Albuquerque to accompany them on a field trip to the old west town of Cimarron, to a hotel more than a century old: the Saint James Hotel. This reportedly was the site of various shoot-outs in the bar, and the hotel once hosted the likes of Pat Garrett and New Mexico Governor, Lew Wallace, who wrote the novel *Ben-Hur*.

These ghost hunters had permission for an all-night investigation, which included access to the old poker room where many a gambler had played cards back in the days of the Wild West.

At about three in the morning, after watching the various aspects of their investigation, I wandered into the poker room and sat down. There were decks of cards and poker chips. I asked for them to film me, and they set up an electromagnetic field reader on the table. This device flashed various colors depending upon the strength of any detectable electromagnetic field. I was in a playful mood at the time, and I announced that I was going to pretend to play poker with a ghost, and if there was any ghost present who would like to join in the game, he was welcome.

I asked the unseen ghost to sit opposite me, and I asked various questions, as to whether he had a moustache, and whether he was familiar with five card stud, *etc.* Curiously, the EMF reader responded appropriately as though my questions were being answered. The most unexpected part, however, was when I began dealing the cards face-up one at a time, commenting on the strength of my hand versus the ghost's hand. The ghost was winning, and I asked if he agreed he had the advantage. The EMF reader responded strongly. When the ghost won the hand, I shoved my whole pile of chips over to the ghost's side of the table and said, "I congratulate you, sir. You have bested me!" The EMF reader went off the scale.

Later a female member of the ghost-hunting team tried the same thing and got no responses at all. We took it that the male chauvinist ghost was offended by the audacity of a woman expecting him to play cards with her.

XIV. Vincent van Gogh on the Mantel

After *The Life After Death Project* came out on DVD, I paid a visit to Dr. Michael Shermer, publisher of *Skeptic* magazine who has authored many books

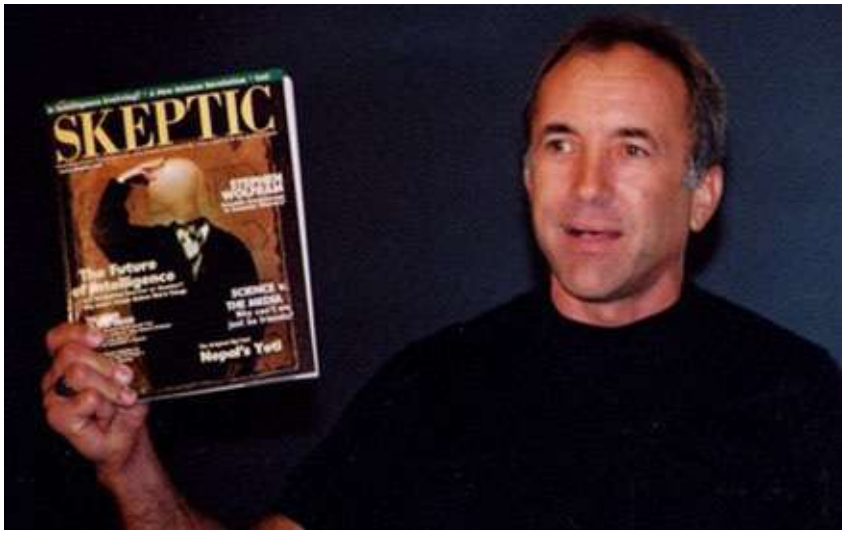
from the skeptic's viewpoint, including *Science Friction*, *The Believing Brain* and *Why People Believe Weird Things*. Dr. Shermer had kindly consented to give an interview for my documentary.

In fact, the day of the interview, I noted two unexpected synchronicities. The first was that on top of the mantel of the fireplace directly behind him during the interview there was a plastic face-mask of Vincent van Gogh that was reversed inside-out. The reversal of the mask caused it to give the illusion of staring at you wherever you walked in the room. I was very familiar with that mask because it was manufactured by Todd E. Mills through his company called Hi-Q products. Todd was a fellow producer on *Timothy Leary's Dead*, and he was the donor of the African mask from Zimbabwe, whose slides of the mask being used in the tribal ceremonial dance had disappeared and were never found, as I previously reported.

When I let Todd know that his Vincent van Gogh mask was on Michael Shermer's fireplace mantel, he thought that was quite a coincidence, because sales of the mask had been remarkably unsuccessful. Todd told me he sold fewer than ten of them in California, so it was odd that the mask was there when I went to interview Dr. Shermer about the case for life after death. Once again, it was a mask that was tying the elements and people together.

The other curious thing was that Dr. Shermer told me he would have to wrap up our interview in a couple hours because that afternoon he was expecting a visit from a writer of some of the original *Twilight Zone* episodes, George Clayton Johnson, who was also co-author of the novel, *Logan's Run*. Dr. Shermer had never met George Clayton Johnson, and I don't recall how he said the meeting was set up, but it was a fact that George Clayton Johnson was a very close friend of Forrest J Ackerman and had attended almost every single Ackerman birthday party.

What did it feel like to me to hear this information? It felt as if Forry were sending an emissary to meet with Dr. Shermer after I completed my interview. (George Clayton Johnson passed away in December, 2015, shortly before this book was published.)



Dr. Michael Shermer, publisher of Skeptic *magazine and Executive Director of the Skeptics Society*.

Over a year after interviewing and filming Dr. Shermer, I sought him out when my documentary was available on DVD, to give him a copy and ask for a review. Dr. Shermer and I talked for hours and went out to lunch together, and I enjoyed our time immensely.

However, as expected, and before even seeing the film or becoming familiar with all of the incidents, Dr. Shermer made it clear that he could not accept my conclusion: i.e., that the spirit of Forrest J Ackerman had survived in some invisible and undetectable form and was sending messages and playing deliberate pranks with the intention of making his invisible presence known. As you understand by now, the skeptic rules out what Dr. Shermer calls agenticity as a viable explanation for any seemingly paranormal phenomena and synchronicities. The skeptic inevitably grasps for alternative explanations. (Grasping at straws, I would say at this point.)

When I mentioned this to Gary Schwartz, he had a memorable comment about the resistance of skeptics to come to terms with the data and evidence. He said “There isn’t one chance in a Godzillion that this isn’t true.” I had to laugh at that. It was a perfect word-play. Godzillion is an expression for the largest conceivable number. And Godzilla, of course, is one of the most famous movie monsters. The expression was a perfect Forry-ism if ever there was one.

I never heard any alternative explanations for these phenomena from Dr. Shermer or any members of the Skeptics Society. Michael Shermer did engage me in correspondence, by email, and he asked me many questions after he had seen the film and sequel. I did my best to answer them all.

I note that he repeatedly used the word “smudge” to describe the ink obliteration. The word smudge has been used by other skeptics, too, in various reviews or articles. The word has false connotations, obviously, because the obliteration was carefully done, neat, targeted to hit four words very precisely, and as the chemists have said who studied it for years, it was obviously deliberate. A smudge is something that happens when you smear ink accidentally from a runny pen. The definition of smudge is “a blurred or smeared mark on the surface of something.” The ink, in the case of my incident, was neither blurred nor smeared. The choice of that word, by the Executive Director of the Skeptics Society, would seem to declare his conclusion without consideration of the actual evidence.

Here is a small sample of our correspondence. I have combined two emails into one:

-----Original Message-----
From: Michael Shermer
Sent: Wed, Jun 12, 2013

Paul, can you briefly summarize (like you do below about the sound file) the biggest incidents in your mind that led you to conclude that Ackerman is communicating from the Other Side, starting I suppose with the biggest one, the ink smudge Joe Amodie line.

And then if you could answer this question for me: From these incidents what do you conclude about (a) the ultimate fate of Forrest J Ackerman and (b) the ultimate fate of all of us (that is, what does all this say about life after death)?

Finally, would you care to speculate as to how Ackerman is able to, say, smudge ink in a Santa Fe bedroom, fix a hard drive, and most interestingly, apparently time travel from the future to sign the page in the *Famous Monsters* magazine just above the Table of Contents line that reads “The Invisible Ink Men Strike Again” from the future when he smudged the ink on your page?

I am writing about this for *Scientific American* in my monthly column.

Another question:

The blue painting of Forry with the clock showing his time of death, done four years before he died: what is your explanation for this? Do you think Forry time traveled back in time into the brain of the artist and directed him to paint the clock hands? I know you don’t know for sure, but what do you suspect is the explanation of this? Or, that he was psychically projecting forward in time to his death at the time of the painting and then telekinetically directed the hand of the

artist to paint the clock hands at two minutes to 12?

BTW, how do you know what time Ackerman died? Do you have a death certificate to confirm his time of death? It wouldn't surprise me if the time of death was something completely different, but I would be happy to be proven wrong.

Thanks!

Michael Shermer

Skeptic magazine

I did my very best to reply to all of Dr. Shermer's questions. Regarding the time of Forry's death, although I did not seek out a death certificate, I took the word of Earl Roesel, who was there at Forry's side when he died, along with two hospice workers. Earl was interviewed for my film and had no reason to invent anything or be untruthful in any way.

Regarding Dr. Shermer's request that I speculate on how some of Forry's apparent posthumous feats were accomplished, I dutifully explained why I did not feel it was my proper role to attempt such an answer. I am not a scientist.

I compared the situation to a problem back in the 1400's, when (as we learn in school) the majority of the uneducated class would have insisted that the Earth was flat. Among the astute, there were some observers who watched sailing ships embarking on journeys and noted that the bottoms of the ships seem to disappear first as the ships went off into the far distance. The masts disappeared last. Although apparently most of the elite of that time did believe in a spherical earth, the uneducated did not accept that notion and could not fathom the reason for the vanishing ship bottoms. Of course, this observation was entirely consistent with the Earth being a sphere, but sometimes data is ignored in order to maintain a cherished (but ignorant) belief.

Skeptics in that era who stuck rigidly to the flat earth concept would have pointed out that the testimony about the ships at sea was totally inconsistent with the Earth being flat, and therefore the reports of the observations of the vessels on the horizon certainly had to be erroneous, perhaps even influenced by that perpetual troublemaker, the Devil. Skeptics also had grave issues with so-called witnesses who claimed they saw rocks (meteorites) falling from the sky. It was a known fact that rocks could not possibly fall from the sky, and so the testimony was ignored and the witnesses branded liars.

This shows the problem with beginning an inquiry on the basis of "known facts" at any given moment in history.

Human knowledge is always incomplete. I am at a loss and disadvantage

because I do not know for sure how or why the things I have reported happened. But I have assured you, the reader – just as I have assured every friend and relative and skeptic I know – that the things I report did happen, and I have sworn to that as I would swear under oath in a court of law.

As far as I know, Dr. Shermer has not written specifically about the Forrest J Ackerman case in *Scientific American*, as he proposed in his email that he intended to do. I could be wrong, but I've found nothing about that on the internet, and I subscribed to *Scientific American* for a primary purpose of noting Dr. Shermer's column when it appeared. He continues to write for the magazine every month. Nor has there been a review or mention of *The Life After Death Project* in *Skeptic* magazine, which he publishes.

I do think, in general (rather than referring to Dr. Shermer specifically), that when the arch-skeptic encounters something at odds with his or her philosophy, the defense of the skeptic is often silence. Better to ignore something that does not support the Newtonian philosophy of causality than shine a spotlight on it when it does not benefit your agenda.

XV. A Leaping Glass Pumpkin, Two Phone Calls and Appearing Pennies

I cannot conclude my contribution to this book without describing the odd incidents that surrounded the passing of two family members.

In April, 2011, Hollace's father, Frank Goodman, passed away at age 91. He had learned about six weeks prior to his death that he had inoperable pancreatic cancer and did not have long to live. He was not what I would call a philosophical man, and we never discussed speculations on life after death.

Though neither an intellectual nor a literary man, Frank Goodman was a delightful person who was deeply loved and admired by most who knew him. Despite some lapses into bad judgment, especially on financial matters, he was coherent, had all his faculties, and was fully engaged with life right up until his final illness.

At the assisted living home where he spent his final years, he was chosen "town mayor" and was friendly to everyone, very active, and he loved to be a joker and share stories. He had personality.

Professionally, he had been a printer for the *Congressional Record* in Washington, D.C., handling hot lead type and working all night every night to have the *Congressional Record* ready in the morning. Once, he smashed his thumb on the job, and he lived the rest of his life with a thumb bent at a peculiar

angle.

Frank moved from the Washington metropolitan area some years after his wife Cecelia died, and he joined us, becoming an integral part of our family lives in southern California.

One of his closest friends in the final years was Ricardo Flores, the driver for the Sunrise Senior Living facility. Ricardo took Frank on many excursions to museums and events, and the two of them developed a strong comradeship in which they could talk freely about their lives.

Ricardo's world was turned upside down by several things that happened the day that Frank died. Ricardo was very upset to lose Frank, and within hours of Frank's body being removed from the facility, Ricardo went to the room where Frank had lived to pay his last respects.

Ricardo reported what took place to the director of the facility, who in turn told Hollace about it, and she told me. Then we sought out Ricardo to hear his story from him personally.

He said that when he entered the room, it suddenly became very, very cold, and as he spoke out his goodbye to Frank, a pumpkin-shaped glass candy holder on top of the refrigerator suddenly leaped off the refrigerator and fell to the ground. The glass did not shatter. Ricardo was shaken by the incident in Frank Goodman's room, because the glass object, he said, was in the middle of the refrigerator top, not close to the edge where it might fall.

This leaping of an inanimate object from its place is of course reminiscent of the Huichol mask that popped off the wall and flew through the air at our dinner party. It is also reminiscent of John Allison's cell phone that would not stay put and fell to the floor three times after having been securely set down on either the mantel or a coffee table.

In *The Life After Death Project* sequel DVD (which includes a section about the passing of Frank Goodman), there is a part in which Kathleen Brown, a New England librarian, tells of books that fell to the floor from an obviously secure position on a shelf in her home in the middle of the night. In fact, the clairvoyant who first familiarized me with apports, Carl Langspecht, said that after his mother died he asked her for a sign while he was in a bookstore, and a book leaped off the shelf and hit the floor. It was called *Hello from Heaven* by Bill and Judy Guggenheim.

Soon after the incident with the pumpkin shaped glass candy holder, Ricardo Flores went to the room at Sunrise Assisted Living called the Bistro, where he was joined by two colleagues who work for the facility, Nelson Enricas and Fernando Mejia. While they were talking, discussing Frank, one of

Ricardo's two cell phones began to ring. He had a personal cell phone and also a phone belonging to the assisted living home. As Ricardo looked at the ringing cell phone, he was shocked to see that it was a call from Frank Goodman. He had Frank's number in his phone directory and Frank's name was up on the screen. When he answered, there of course was no response. He hardly had time to absorb the strangeness of this incident when the other cell phone rang. Once again, it said it was Frank Goodman calling. And no one was there.

I interrogated Nelson Enricas and Fernando Mejia about this at a later date, and both of them concur that this is exactly what happened. This so unsettled Ricardo that we are told he later went through a period of personal depression. The fact that this could have happened shattered his sense of reality.

XVI. My Mother's Pennies From Heaven

A little more than two years later, in July of 2013, my mother, Frances Davids, suffered a very severe stroke that left her partially paralyzed and unable to speak. She also had great difficulty swallowing or eating. She was 92. She had taught fifth grade for her entire career and had been a teacher beloved by students and parents alike, as testified to in many personal letters to her. The tragedy of her later years – a tragedy for our entire family – was my father's decline from Alzheimer's disease. She became a devoted caregiver, making his comfortable survival her principal mission in life for his final twelve years. Following his death, she moved several years later to southern California after my sister and her family relocated to the Los Angeles area from Virginia.

My mother, though never a fan of my obsession with cinema monsters (or Forrest J Ackerman and his magazine), was an admirer of most of my other activities, especially my art, and she was proud to adorn the walls of her apartment with many of my paintings. We related through art and literature – and poetry – she loved my outpouring of poetic writings which became three published books the year before her death. She also dearly loved some of my films, especially *Starry Night*.

About six weeks before she died, I drove her to the beach for lunch one day, and she gifted me a little change purse. She explained that it had belonged to my father. When my father was in an Alzheimer's day-care facility, he never liked to go there without having money on him, so she provided him with the change purse filled with coins.

At that point he did not know one denomination from another, and he could not count change. She gifted me the change purse as a memento, and I noted it

was still filled with coins, but I did not open it to look inside to see what coins were there.

My mother passed away August 2nd, 2013, about ten days after the debilitating stroke.

Within a week of my mother's passing, my sister, Jeanie Dwyer, and I began the laborious process of clearing out Mom's Pasadena apartment, boxing up possessions and getting workers to help wrap furniture to prepare it for transport to storage.

One afternoon, while we were alone together in her apartment, as we were taking inventory of my father's books on one of my mother's bookshelves, Jeanie and I noticed something odd. A shiny penny just appeared on top of a bookshelf where moments before we were itemizing my father's books. We both agreed that we had looked at that bookshelf carefully, and there was no penny there moments earlier.

As the process of clearing her apartment continued over several days, so did the phenomenon of the appearing pennies. In one instance, my brother-in-law was seated talking, and we both suddenly observed that a penny had appeared on the carpet right between our feet.

At that time, Hollace and I were getting ready to depart for the 2013 Toronto Film Festival in Canada, which would take place soon after the coming funeral. Hollace was required to attend the festival on business for Universal Pictures, and I planned to accompany her. As I piled some boxes and Ziploc bags of items near the door of my mother's apartment, I accidently kicked the pile and things came toppling over. To my surprise, right on top of the fallen pile, on top of a Ziploc bag, there was a shiny Canadian penny.

The saga of my mother and the appearing pennies has continued for both my sister and I for the three years since my mother died. No other denomination of money has appeared – no dimes, nickels or quarters. The pennies keep showing up in unexpected places at significant moments.

By way of example, my sister was motivated one day to move a vase she kept on a certain table, and beneath it she found a penny. Neither she nor her husband Kevin put it there, and they live together alone. They have no housekeeper or maid, and none of her grown children has ever placed a penny anyplace in the house.

Another time she had the carpets in a certain room steam-cleaned so she knew the carpet was clean. She had even recently vacuumed there. But upon entering the room, she found a penny on the carpet.

In my case, there has also been a trail of pennies. One of the more odd

instances was when I met for lunch with my friend Saundra – whose missing sunglasses appeared on the passenger side of the floor of her car immediately after our lunch. I got up to go to the men's room during that lunch, and when I came back, there was a penny precisely where I had been sitting. I had not mentioned to Saundra about the penny anomalies. As you recall, just after that she found the missing sunglasses on the floor on the passenger side of her car.

Another time, I was seated in a hotel lobby at a conference speaking with a friend, and I suddenly observed that the coffee table with the glass top to my immediate right had three pennies immediately beneath the glass. I had not noticed that when our conversation had begun. I lifted the top of the coffee table and took those three pennies. Later, I learned that my sister had recently visited my mother's grave and left three pennies on top of the plaque.

I returned to Princeton University for a reunion. I was driven to the university by Jennifer Stein, whom I had been visiting in Philadelphia. I had placed my bag in the back of her van, and when I set it there, I know there was no penny beneath it. However, when she dropped me off and I removed the luggage from her car, there was a penny directly underneath the suitcase.

During all that time, I did not know where the change purse was that my mother had gifted me. I had misplaced it somewhere, and that bothered me – that I had not taken enough special care to put it someplace where I would always be able to locate it. One day while cleaning out my desk drawers, I found the change purse, and I opened it. To my surprise, I saw that it was filled with pennies, plus one nickel and one dime. However, there were over twenty pennies inside. There was also a handwritten note from my mother, explaining the significance of the change purse for my father.

At that moment, it dawned on me that my mother had established a common link between us involving pennies about six weeks before she suffered the stroke – and until that moment I had never opened the change purse to discover that fact.

After experiencing that phenomenon, I did a search online and discovered that "pennies from heaven" is a fairly common experience. Many people have reported the sudden discovery of pennies showing up after the death of a loved one. This is by no means a new phenomenon.

Interestingly, the drawer where I located the change purse was the same desk drawer where Joe Moe's casino player's card had shown up, and the same drawer where Sean Fernald's medicial eye insurance card had turned up, too.

My mother, as I indicated early on, was an arch-skeptic. She described herself as an agnostic, but she had no beliefs whatsoever regarding anything

paranormal or spiritual or religious. She thought mediums were all frauds, séances were for fools, prayer was a useless exercise that served only to make some people feel more secure, and evolution totally explained everything there was to know about how life arose on earth and why human beings inhabit the Earth today.

She did not believe in life after death. She did not believe in extraterrestrials, either, and she had no confidence at all that life would be found on any other worlds.

You already know that I once confided in her my feeling that the ink obliteration that appeared inexplicably seemed to me to be a message from my departed mentor, Forry, and that I had told her I thought that it was actual physical evidence of life after death. She said she had never heard anything so weird and ridiculous in her entire life. Actually, I think "ludicrous" was the word she used.

XVII. The Marilyn Anomalies

I told of the odd incident when I went to visit Sue and Abel Roderick of the Messenger Collection, when I first saw the negatives of the Marilyn Monroe Golden Dreams Calendar pose. I was given the opportunity to film the owner of those negatives (Albert Babbitt of Las Vegas, Nevada) telling the story of their history. Soon one opportunity led to another, and I found myself embarking on a new feature documentary, called Marilyn Monroe Declassified. What began as a biography of Marilyn Monroe's life and career soon evolved into an in depth investigation of the unsolved mystery of her death. The more I learned, the more I sensed that if Marilyn's spirit is "Out There," with the other larger than life spirits discussed in this book, then she is a rather disquieted spirit indeed. The case grew and solidified that her death was neither a "probable suicide," as officially reported, nor an accidental overdose, but rather that she was eliminated by elements who in their estimation determined that she was a potential "loose cannon," as a mistress to President JFK.

This is neither the time nor the place to tell the whole story, and readers may wish to seek out *Marilyn Monroe Declassified* or visit the website (www.marilyndeclassified.com). However, there is a long list of bizarre incidents that accompanied my efforts on that film, and as ITC, some resemble other incidents you know about now, such as the antique clock that chimed while being videotaped and the computer that was asleep, and came awake and retrieved a closed program, in Dr. Jay Siegel's lab (although no one had touched

it).

While filming an interview with film director Philippe Mora, I caught his Mac computer over his shoulder in the frame. That computer was not in sleep mode; it was turned off. During a moment in our conversation when we were discussing a key detail of the murder theory – in fact at the instant I uttered the word "entrapment" – while the camera continued filming, the Mac sprang to life, booting itself up with no one touching it. Philippe Mora assures me that this has never happened before, and no one whom I have asked has been able to explain how this would be physically and scientifically possible. The moment was captured on camera, and the surprise and shock on Philippe Mora's face is palpable. It was truly one of those very extreme "What the f–?" moments. And it was not the first Marilyn incident for Philippe and Pamela Mora, who live on a street in Hollywood filled with history of the stars who lived nearby, including Shelley Winters.

On their coffee table they have a framed photo of Marilyn's famous nude Golden Dreams calendar pose. Philippe, using a document declassified by the FBI, put together aspects of the Marilyn Monroe death plot that were very controversial – and involved Robert F. Kennedy, the attorney general during the JFK administration. Philippe was scheduled to discuss this on two major national TV shows, both of which canceled on him abruptly – and the political influence in the censorship of his appearances was rather obvious. The next morning, he and Pamela awoke to find their framed photo of Marilyn on the floor, with the glass cracked. There were no earthquakes, no tremors. They had no rational explanation (and therefore allowed themselves to imagine that Marilyn's spirit's displeasure might have had something to do with it.) They never reframed it, and still it sits on their coffee table, with cracked glass.

If the list of "Forry anomalies" is well over a hundred, the Marilyn list certainly exceeds a dozen. There's the Max Lehmann incident. Max is the artist whom I urged to create a rare and unusual Marilyn sculpture. He calls it "Marilyn Monrobot," because it depicts Marilyn as similar to the female robot in Fritz Lang's classic film, Metropolis. (That film was one of Forry's all-time favorites.) Max then went out for Chinese food and opened his fortune cookie: *A blonde from afar has something interesting for you*. How many fortune cookies have you opened that mention blondes?

As Christmas gifts, the Chinese Theater in Hollywood (no connection to fortune cookies!) gave framed photos of various actors and actresses putting their hands and feet in wet cement in front of the theater. They had ten different ones. Hollace, who was on the theater's gift list, was given a framed photo of

Marilyn and Jane Russell being immortalized in cement for their roles in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. The people handling gifts on behalf of the Chinese Theater had no idea of our Marilyn-film-in-progress, which had not been announced, and there were nine other possible photos that might have landed on Hollace's desk. Yet Marilyn it was.

We reluctantly accepted an invitation to a Hollywood Christmas party and went in spite of the fact that we were both exhausted. It turned out that it was in the Mauretania building, where JFK stayed during the 1960 Democratic Convention. The rumor was that Marilyn had a tryst with him there, and photos of them adorn the hallways. (One shows Marilyn with her dog named Maf, a gift of Frank Sinatra and given that name because of Sinatra's connection with the Mafia!)

When I filmed at the Marilyn Monroe suite at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, on a light-stand with six bright blinding globes, one of those lights kept going off, then on, then off and on again, with each "on" at full strength, as if in response to our discussion of Marilyn's days living in that suite. This was caught one time on videotape. I called out "Hello, Marilyn," and it turned back on again.

There were other nudges from Marilyn, and the most astounding ones involved the TV in our Los Angeles bedroom. The TV has several devices attached to it, including a cable box with DVR, an old videocassette player, a Blu-Ray DVD player, and a DVD recorder/player device. That last device can make a DVD of a TV show. In the memory of that device there was a show I had recorded about Marilyn Monroe, which had many clips of her life and also some testimony about her death from Sgt. Jack Clemmons, the first L.A. policeman to arrive officially at the scene.

In the past, I cannot recall any incident of that device turning itself on, although it does respond to a remote control. On a day when I was editing a scene of testimony from Sgt. Jack Clemmons in the downstairs editing room, I took a break and went to the upstairs bedroom. I was shocked to see the television on and the face of Sgt. Jack Clemmons clear as day on the TV screen. I did not think I left the TV on, and I certainly had not turned on the DVD record/play device. Why would it be on, and why and how could it be showing me the face of the same man whose interview I was editing on completely separate equipment downstairs?

Sgt. Clemmons was the first to claim that Matrilyn's death was murder, not suicide. Was this odd incident another "helpful hint" from "elsewhere?" I took a photo of the TV.

Sgt. Jack Clemmons as he appeared unexpectedly on the Davids' TV upstairs, while Paul was editing an interview of him on a completely separate device downstairs.

Something similar happened again, with very strange timing. It happened as Hollace and I took a pause from watching a DVD of the 2013 movie, Belle. There was a moment in *Belle* where there was discussion of a Latin legal phrase that in English goes like this: "Let justice be done, though the heavens may fall."

I said to Hollace that it would be an excellent quote for our movie about Marilyn Monroe, because her 1962 death, as finally unraveled in our film, was murder, not suicide, and there never was justice.

I said, "Let's get the truth out, though the heavens may fall."

Twenty minutes later, after our brief snack break in the middle of watching *Belle*, when we came back upstairs, the TV no longer was showing a freeze frame where I had stopped the movie. Instead, a freeze frame of Marilyn Monroe was staring at us from the TV. As with the Jack Clemmons incident, I took photos. We were both absolutely astonished, and a chill ran up my spine.

More Instrumental Trans-Communication, prompted by our discussion of justice for Marilyn? And what would the skeptics say? More "mere coincidence?" Something for their "gray basket" that they won't address?

The date on the images in the TV screen is the date the program was originally recorded into the memory of the record/play device, not the date the incidents occurred. The program was recorded into the device October 20, 2014, and the incidents happened in February of 2015.

The TV fixed to the wall of the Davids' bedroom, as it looked as Marilyn Monroe inexplicably appeared.

Marilyn unexpectedly appeared on the Davids' TV screen in a freeze frame from a DVD recorder/player with built-in memory that turned itself on.

This is the Chinese fortune cookie that artist Max Lehmann received after

agreeing to create the "Marilyn Monrobot" sculpture.

17. SOME PERSONAL RUMINATIONS

At this point, I am prepared to accept that those on the Other Side have essentially given me an assignment. The assignment is to complete the task of getting this message out and completing both the video and written documentation of what really has happened since Forry died.

My rational mind has long since lost the battle to explain and win out in the effort to make sense of these events in my life. I now feel, to put it succinctly, that I am living with The Invisible Man – or the old TV series Topper has become my reality and that I live with a very friendly but mischievous ghost (named Forry). And that my mother's pennies are there to caution me to be as frugal as she always was. (She lived through the Depression and never trusted the stock market!)

Reality itself has begun to feel warped, under the influence of forces beyond me and outside my control. It has begun to feel that the substance of life is like a sort of simulation – a virtual reality show that has been twisting and shaping and molding itself to keep showing me that I am being led. At times it feels like being a sort of experimental animal for those beyond me who have been watching me wind my way through their maze.

It is disquieting to realize that when I was a student at Princeton, majoring in Psychology, I had more than a few textbooks that would describe all these feelings as symptoms of mental illness: a loss of a solid sense of reality (schizophrenia); feeling that one is being watched (paranoia); feeling an undue sense of one's importance (delusions of grandeur), and obsessions.

Add to that the "I'm out to change the world" syndrome, with the feeling of having a mission of monumental importance. A psychiatrist would compile quite a dossier if he heard all these things from a patient on a couch. However, among the anecdotes and sworn statements, I have brought you here (with help from Dr. Gary Schwartz and Dr. John Allison, as well as Jack Kelleher) a book packed with evidence. There was ample scientific evidence to keep John Allison at work for three years. When you read his impressive bio at the end of this book, you'll feel that surely if anyone could have solved the mystery of the ink obliteration

(or the “ink smudge” as Dr. Michael Shermer insists on saying), it would have been John Allison.

If this were all the product of some mental delusion, you would never have found within these pages the examples that build the argument for life after death communication as methodically as a courtroom case, complete with evidentiary photographs. Hopefully, you have gotten to know the personality of Forrest J Ackerman so well that you will be comfortable with nodding to yourself and telling me it all makes perfect sense to you now – at least as much sense as something so utterly nonsensical can make.

I have been asked many times, including by Dr. Michael Shermer, what I now conclude about (a) the ultimate fate of Forrest J Ackerman and (b) the ultimate fate of all of us (that is, what does all this say about life after death)?

Let me begin with what I see as the skeptic’s ultimate line of defense. This is the type of thinking on which I was nurtured. Thought processes such as: “It is a cold, empty, black, vast universe that is completely unconcerned with human fate or the fate of anything living.” “Life is tenuous and fragile and accidental and coincidental, an accident of a process of evolution that took millions of years.” “Life is completely impermanent with no connection to any larger intelligent forces.” “There are no angels or gods on Mount Olympus to play with us for sport.”

For the true secular materialist skeptic, Shakespeare said it best in Act V, Scene V of *Macbeth*, when Seyton reports, “The queen, my lord, is dead,” and Macbeth responds:

She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out brief candle!
Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Is in fact life a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing? Nothing, that is, except perhaps the meaning we each personally and subjectively assign to it for the brief time we are alive? And then it ends – eternal nothingness, end of story?

My experiences since the 2009 tribute to Forrest J Ackerman reach a critical mass of evidence, I think, and they contradict all of that. Scientific data provided by Dr John Allison and Dr. Gary Schwartz supports me in this conclusion – the services of a psychiatrist to analyze me as a patient due to these beliefs would seem to be not required.

While the skeptic refuses to impart or interpret any agenticity in the mysterious workings of the universe, I assert without flinching or retreating, that the evidence of this case supports agenticity firmly.

Of course, science demands repeatability. Scientists in Australia, America, Iran, Zimbabwe and Afghanistan all agree that there are elements we have come to call, in English: "Helium," "Hydrogen," "Oxygen" and "Nitrogen." They agree on their atomic weights. They agree as to which elements are inert and which ones undergo chemical reactions, and the circumstances required for those reactions and what the end products will be. Scientists as a rule do not care for one-offs – those peculiar, singular, one-time anomalies that do not fit. They do not like the kinds of incidents that make it to the pages of Charles Fort's *The Book of the Damned* – or incidents that grace the volumes of *Ripley's Believe It Or Not*. Those are incidents that make the average person shrug or smile, only to be quickly forgotten or ignored by most.

Jeffrey Bennett, a distinguished scientific author who investigates all theories and evidence regarding astronomy, aerospace and extraterrestrial life, has written a book called *Beyond UFOS: The Search for Extraterrestrial Life and its Astonishing Implications for Our Future*. In it, he states:

"Science is a way of distinguishing possibilities from realities. We can imagine all the possibilities that we want, but science asks us to put them to the test. If we find confirming evidence for our possibilities, then we have at least some reason to think they reflect reality. If our possibilities conflict with reality, then we know they are figments of our imagination. Of course, oftentimes we have no clear evidence either way. In such cases, the job of science is to help us keep looking and learning, until we someday acquire the evidence we seek."

Have I presented possibilities, or have I presented realities? In my mind, my testimony describes reality, in spite of the fact that it will seem to many or most

that my possibilities conflict with reality. But these are not figments of my imagination. Much of what I described had witnesses besides just myself.

I hopefully have delivered sufficient evidence so that we are not forced into a conclusion that this is one of the "oftentimes we have no clear evidence either way." If it is the job of science to help us keep looking and learning, as Jeffrey Bennett has stated, then what I have set forth here is a myriad of reasons to keep looking and is an aid for learning what to look for and why.

Even skeptic Michael Shermer, in autographing one of his books for me (*The Believing Brain*), wrote the inscription: ""In respect of your honest search and integrity." He granted that my search was an honest one and that I had integrity. That was a profound concession from the leader of the charge of the skeptical brigade. Nevertheless, he reserves the right to disagree with my conclusions (without offering any alternative explanations except for "chance" and "coincidence" or "put that in our gray basket of things we don't understand today but will someday.")

I conclude that the inkblot that appeared on my document, though very small physically, is a potent, loud and scientifically profound occurrence that signals the existence of invisible intelligence that can manipulate things in our world.

Just as thousands of intelligent man-made signals travel around us and through us (TV, radio, cell phones, computer and iPad internet communication, etc.) all of which require decoding using technology for us to recognize, I am prepared now to conclude that there are intelligent signals (and actual interactions with us and manipulations in our world) that do not originate from living humans.

I do not pretend to know whether they are some manifestation of the actual character of the universe and matter itself, or whether they come from individualized packets of intelligence as we might expect from a spirit that retains the character of a person, now deceased.

Some may wish to exclude a few of the details as "mere" coincidence. Nevertheless, I think the many examples in this book far surpass a critical mass. The likeliest conclusion, for me, would be that the existence of ghosts or spirit entities is no longer far-fetched, and that for the most strong-willed, firmly defined and intense of us (I am speaking of intensity of spirit in life) some aspects of our intention, will and intensity survives the death of our bodies – and enables us to continue to interact with the living if there is a strong will to do so.

In *Hamlet*, did Shakespeare get it right with the dramatic device of the ghost? In *A Christmas Carol*, did Charles Dickens get it right with the Ghosts of

Christmas Past, Present and Future?

If spirits really do survive after our deaths, perhaps eventual dissipation of those spirits into nothingness does take place, just as our star the sun has a finite life and probably won't be hanging around the Milky Way as a ghost once its energy is expended. However, even then, as Gary Schwartz likes to point out, its light will keep traveling for billions of years.

I am not ready to conclude that survival as a spirit that can interact with the living applies to all of us. However, from the evidence of the Ackerman case, it appears that some people who are larger than life in life may retain something of their essence after death in some form, including a sense of humor. Their intervention in the lives of the living may be inconsistent and sometimes only symbolic (i.e., it requires some decoding from the living to understand), but sometimes their presence has a characteristic of a message, and that is why I urge you to be attentive to the small details. Even one as small as an inkblot.

18. BREAKING NEWS – STOP THE PRESSES

I felt compelled to add this chapter before surrendering my part of the book and passing the baton to Dr. Gary E. Schwartz for PART TWO.

As you know well by now, Dr. Michael Shermer, Executive Director of the Skeptics Society and Publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, appeared in *The Life After Death Project* as a counter-weight to the argument for life after death and after death communication (ADC). He was in every sense the Devil's Advocate – the naysayer, the one there to try to throw a bucket of cold water on every impulse toward a positive conclusion on the issue.

I have devoted some of the preceding pages to explaining Dr. Shermer's point of view: that there is no independent agenticity existing in the universe. He has always maintained that unlikely relationships between events are due only to chance, and that our "believing brain" is wired to see patterns and relationships where none really exist.

From the time I first approached him, he did not and would not interpret any of the data presented, or any of the incidents, as acceptable scientific evidence that Forrest J Ackerman was communicating from the Other Side. He did not offer alternative explanations for the data or the findings of the scientists whom I involved in the research. His position was a frustrating one for me. He left open only a crack in the door, when he stated that if someday it is proven that there is life after death, it won't be something paranormal – it would likely be due to some aspect of quantum theory that we do not currently understand. It will become an additional chapter in our science textbooks. However, he sincerely doubted that would ever happen. It is the skeptic's job to doubt. In Dr. Shermer's case, it is a paying job.

Therefore, it was with great surprise that I saw that on September 16, 2014, Dr. Shermer published an article in *Scientific American* that was like a seismic cataclysm in this ongoing debate and discussion.

Originally published under the title "Infrequencies," the title in *Scientific American* was: ANOMALOUS EVENTS THAT CAN SHAKE ONE'S

SKEPTICISM TO THE CORE. The subtitle was: I JUST WITNESSED AN EVENT SO MYSTERIOUS THAT IT SHOOK MY SKEPTICISM.

His article has been widely disseminated online, and someone has made a video on YouTube with the article quoted word-for-word.

Dr. Shermer writes:

"Often I am asked if I have ever encountered something that I could not explain. What my interlocutors have in mind are not bewildering enigmas such as consciousness or U.S. foreign policy but anomalous and mystifying events that suggest the existence of the paranormal or supernatural. My answer is: yes, now I have.

"The event took place on June 25, 2014. On that day I married Jennifer Graf, from Koln, Germany. She had been raised by her mom; her grandfather, Walter, was the closest father figure she had growing up, but he died when she was sixteen. In shipping her belongings to my home before the wedding, most of the boxes were damaged and several precious heirlooms lost, including her grandfather's binoculars. His 1978 Philips 070 transistor radio arrived safely, so I set out to bring it back to life after decades of muteness. I put in new batteries and opened it up to see if there were any loose connections to solder. I even tried 'percussive maintenance,' said to work on such devices – smacking it sharply against a hard surface. Silence. We gave up and put it at the back of a desk drawer in our bedroom.

"Three months later, after affixing the necessary signatures to our marriage license at the Beverly Hills courthouse, we returned home, and in the presence of my family said our vows and exchanged rings. Being 9,000 kilometers from family, friends and home, Jennifer was feeling amiss and lonely. She wished her grandfather were there to give her away. She whispered that she wanted to say something to me alone, so we excused ourselves to the back of the house where we could hear music playing in the bedroom. We don't have a music system there, so we searched for laptops and iPhones and even opened the back door to check if the neighbors were playing music. We followed the sound to the printer on the desk, wondering – absurdly – if this combined printer/scanner/fax machine also included a radio. Nope.

"At that moment Jennifer shot me a look I haven't seen since the supernatural thriller *The Exorcist* startled audiences. 'That can't be what I think it is, can it?' she said. She opened the desk drawer and pulled out her

grandfather's transistor radio, out of which a romantic love song wafted. We sat in stunned silence for minutes. 'My grandfather is here with us,' Jennifer said, tearfully. 'I'm not alone.'

"Shortly thereafter we returned to our guests with the radio playing as I recounted the backstory. My daughter, Devin, who came out of her bedroom just before the ceremony began, added, 'I heard the music coming from your room just as you were about to start.' The odd thing is that we were there getting ready just minutes before that time, without music.

"Later that night we fell asleep to the sound of classical music emanating from Walter's radio. Fittingly, it stopped working the next day and has remained silent ever since.

"What does this mean? Had it happened to someone else I might suggest a chance electrical anomaly and the law of large numbers as an explanation – with billions of people having billions of experiences every day, there's bound to be a handful of extremely unlikely events that stand out in their timing and meaning. In any case, such anecdotes do not constitute scientific evidence that the dead survive or that they can communicate with us via electronic equipment.

"Jennifer is as skeptical as I am when it comes to paranormal and supernatural phenomena. Yet the eerie conjunction of these deeply evocative events gave her the distinct feeling that her grandfather was there and that the music was his gift of approval. **I have to admit; it rocked me back on my heels and shook my skepticism to its core as well**. (Emphasis added) I savored the experience more than the explanation.

"The emotional interpretations of such anomalous events grant them significance regardless of their causal account. **And if we are to take seriously the scientific credo to keep an open mind and remain agnostic when the evidence is indecisive or the riddle unsolved, we should not shut the doors of perception when they may be opened to us to marvel in the mysterious."** (Emphasis added)

With this article, Dr. Shermer shook his readers and followers and Skeptics Society members to their very core. The first comment posted at *Scientific American* about the article, from someone named Mark, stated: "I was embarrassed to read your concluding paragraph. What are we to keep an open mind about? That Jennifer's dead grandfather maybe fixed the radio?"

Another reader commented that Dr. Shermer's statements were probably "emotional distortions from being personally connected to the event."

Someone also posted that this reminded him “of the story of Feynman’s first wife. After she had died of tuberculosis at a very young age, Feynman discovered that the hands on the bedside clock in her room had stopped working at the exact time that she was said to have died. Defying the temptation to evoke the supernatural, Feynman said that it was likely that one of the nurses knocked it off the table in all the excitement of trying to revive his wife and the ensuing fall caused it to stop working, as it was an old clock and Feynman had to fix it several times before. A most committed skeptic if ever there was one.”

The comment was also made that “Skepticism is not a belief to be shaken. It’s a method. It can be demonstrated to be wrong or that there is a better method to be used instead, but not shaken.”

Dr. Shermer obviously disagreed. He is a prolific mainstream writer. His books *Why People Believe Weird things*, *The Believing Brain* and *Science Friction* are cornerstone skeptical works that prove he chooses his words carefully, and he had now declared that his skepticism was not merely shaken but **shaken to the core**.

I sincerely thank Dr. Shermer for having the honesty, independence and courage to write his article in *Scientific American*. It is very helpful to furthering the spirit of open-mindedness, curiosity, wonder and amazement that is a significant goal of this book. It also serves as a bridge between two communities that are often in heated conflict with one another – the skeptical community and the “paranormal” community that is convinced that “something unknown is doing we don’t know what.” Does that sound like garbled grammar? That didn’t matter to at least one documentary filmmaker whose name is Renée Scheltema. In fact *Something Unknown is Doing We Don’t Know What* is the name of an excellent 2009 documentary about so-called paranormal phenomena that features Dr. Gary Schwartz.

The film with one of the strangest names played at many film festivals. Paul Davids saw it in Santa Fe in 2009 at the time his easel was missing.

As publisher of Pasadena-based *Skeptic* magazine, Dr. Shermer has occasionally featured articles that depict the passion of some of the prominent "post-materialist scientists." The inclination to give more attention to those with controversial (and even spiritualist-leaning) views has noticeably increased since Dr. Shermer had his own personal "close encounter" with a weird and inexplicable incident. A cover story in 2015 was devoted to Alfred Russel Wallace, who, if he had had an aggressive press agent back in the 1800's, might today be remembered for formulating the theories of evolution and natural selection. However, Darwin took that prize. It was a case of synchronicity in science if ever there was one – two brilliant minds making the same scientific breakthroughs at almost precisely the same time. One of them (Darwin, of course) is much remembered today; the other to a far lesser extent. The *Skeptic* article gives much time and attention to Alfred Wallace's beliefs in mediums and psychic phenomena. One wonders if it denotes a new editorial acceptance of the subject that has been favored by my co-author, Dr. Schwartz, throughout his career.

Skeptic *magazine bravely tipped its hat to an important scientist (Alfred Russel Wallace) who arrived at many conclusions about "paranormal phenomena" close to those we argue for in this book.*

At least the world of so-called "paranormal phenomena" is more comfortably in the cross-hairs of the skeptical world now, and not always for the purpose of taking destructive aim. Dr. Shermer has shown some personal evolution (as long as we are on the subject of evolution and Darwin and Wallace), with a tendency to sometimes treat the paranormal more with genuine intellectual curiosity and intrigue than with an attitude of disdain and dismay that is sometimes characteristic of his popular books.

That remark will serve as notice to the reader that we now have concluded PART ONE. I pass the torch to Dr. Gary Schwartz, who has written the next seven chapters.

PART TWO

CHAPTERS 19 – 25 by Gary E. Schwartz, Ph.D.

CHAPTER 26 by Paul Davids and John Allison, Ph.D.

CHAPTER 27 – ADDENDUM (Paul Davids' Indexed List of all the Unexplained Phenomena connected with the "Ackerman Afterlife Case")

ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

INDEX

19. CAN AN ATHEIST CHANGE HIS MIND (AFTER HE DIES)?

Hello. Dr. Gary Schwartz here, reporting for a pre-flight check before you the reader and I become airborne together. You can think of this book as being like an air journey with a connecting flight. My coauthor, Paul Davids, with assist from Dr. John Allison and Jack Kelleher, has taken you this far in your journey. It's like you're now in a hub and changing planes, and I'll be the pilot who hopefully now delivers you safely to your destination.

And how would I describe that destination?

It's a destination not of geographical coordinates, but of a place of understanding. A certain type of understanding – let's call it the best we can provide with the tools science and reason and logic have placed at our disposal in our present era. Although I've been working in the field of life after death research for almost two decades, and most of that time with university encouragement and approval, I still feel like a newcomer. Hopefully, I'm not a babe in these woods, but we the living will always be at a certain disadvantage in trying to discover the answers to our biggest questions. And the biggest of all questions, for the living, is probably what happens after we pass on, after we "shed the mortal coil," after the body is six feet under – or cremated to a physical existence as ash.

Thus far, this book has used personal experiences – and a scientific investigation of a specific, very baffling case of apparent after death communication – to counter the hypothesis put forward by my mother from the time I was a child. And her hypothesis was: from dust we come and to dust we return. Paul's parents raised him with the same existential world view – that beyond this lifetime, a cold, dark, lonely void awaits us, because we are but a product of evolution, and evolution provided us no eternal inheritance.

There are four types of evidence that have been repeatedly offered in this book thus far, as was the case in the documentary *The Life After Death Project*. There are physical phenomena – like ink appearing, or the word Ackerman

appearing on a screen, or slides disappearing, papers falling down. A second category would be synchronicities. And synchronicities are unusual occurrences or the pairing of events that are highly improbable, that are seemingly connected to someone who has passed. For example, the wine bottle, or the observation when Sean called out to Forry that if the strange phenomena were real, would he produce a spider bite? And then Sean didn't have one spider bite, he had two. And then Paul had two – and I also had two!

The third category would be information from mediums, and all the mediums involved in our investigation regarding Forrest have provided very compelling evidence that speaks to the fact that these mediums are picking up information about Forry.

The fourth category has to do with the use of specialized technology for communication (Instrumental Trans-Communication – or ITC). No one category by itself serves as "proof." But when all four of them simultaneously and independently are providing strong evidence consistent with the hypothesis that there is life after death, the combination of all four, like the corners of a pyramid, all point to the idea of survival of consciousness, and therefore that Forrest is here.

I did not know Forrest J Ackerman when he was physically alive. In fact, I had never heard of Mr. Ackerman, a.k.a. Forry, nor had I heard of many of his mentees, including Paul Davids. All that changed when Paul sought me out to help him determine if Forry's soul and spirit were indeed still here.

From the beginning I was impressed with the personal histories and accomplishments of the mentor Forry and his many successful mentees, and that list includes some of the most important and successful producers, directors, special effects designers and makeup artists in the film industry today. That list also includes Paul, who has directed about ten films of many genres (mainly documentaries), and who started out his career as production coordinator of *The Transformers* television series for Marvel Productions. What an amazing group of people. Nonetheless, the truth is that at the beginning, as I mentioned at the outset, I was very skeptical of Paul's supposedly documented anomalies involving Forry. And that's putting it mildly. For example, how did I know whether these alleged anomalies were not all (1) hoaxes of a devious mind and/or (2) the misperceptions of a deranged mind? For all I knew when I first met Paul, as accomplished as he apparently was in his field, he could have been a closet sociopath and/or psychotic.

Yes, Paul has wonderful credentials, including his successful undergraduate career at Princeton University. And yes, Paul has a longstanding marriage with a

highly successful spouse. Hollace Davids has been Senior Vice President of Special Projects at Universal Pictures for about two decades, managing major motion picture premieres, and their children appear to be happy and successful as well.

However, this is not what led me to conclude that Paul was for real; it was the extensive evidence associated with Forry. Eventually I was forced by the totality of the observations, coupled with the serious efforts Paul made to have the evidence responsibly examined and analyzed, to come to the conclusion that Forry was likely doing his best to prove that he is still here.

In fact, in light of the totality of the evidence, I came to the conclusion that Forry was doing an exceptionally good job at this. And in the process, I came to appreciate that despite Paul's previous forays into some very contentious topics, such as the possible existence of extraterrestrial intelligences, Paul was a genuine truth seeker. Stated somewhat poetically, I came to the conclusion that Paul's forays with Forry were genuine.

I was impressed with Forry's apparent intelligence, creativity, and passion for demonstrating to his devoted extended family members that he was alive and seemingly thriving in the greater reality. But I was especially impressed with the fact that this required that he, a devout disbeliever in life beyond the grave, had to give up his skeptical beliefs in light of the evidence he was apparently personally experiencing "on the Other Side." This required that Paul had to give up his skeptical beliefs, too.

I. Famous Skeptics who have Changed Their Mind After They Died

I should confess that Forry was not the first "bigger than life" person who had been a committed disbeliever about life after death when he was physically alive, who then changed his mind after he died. Though here is not the place to share the preponderance of this evidence, over the past decade I have documented three prior cases of well-known "bigger than life" famous skeptical scientists and entertainers who evidenced changes in their minds and hearts after they died.

The first case involves Dr. Carl Sagan, the distinguished astrophysics professor from Cornell University and creator of the acclaimed PBS television series *Cosmos*. Dr. Sagan was widely known for his skepticism of the paranormal and spirituality. Sagan was a great hero of mine. One of Sagan's favorite quotes was: "Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence." I could not agree more with this statement, and I cite Sagan often. In the case of

Forry, both the claims and the evidence squarely fit the criterion of being extraordinary.

The second case involves Dr. Albert Einstein, the Nobel Prize winning luminary who professed to believe in an impersonal God yet simultaneously disbelieved in life beyond death. In fact, when Einstein was once asked the question "Do you believe in immortality?" he said: "No, and one life is enough for me." The observations I have made, as introduced in Rhonda Schwartz's book *Love Eternal, New Edition*, strongly suggest that both he and Dr. Sagan have changed their minds.

And the third case involves Mr. Harry Houdini, the master magician and escape artist who spent the later part of his remarkable career exposing and debunking fraudulent physical mediums. Since "HHH" as I sometimes describe him in scientific writings – which stands for "Hypothesized Harry Houdini" – has produced highly replicable effects in laboratory experiments using super-sensitive photon detecting equipment, and Houdini is a hero of Paul's as well as mine, I will share some of the laboratory evidence involving Houdini in an upcoming chapter.

Paul has requested that, over the next five chapters, I share with you how it is that I have come to the firm conclusion that the survival of consciousness (SOC) hypothesis is "almost certainly true." In fact, he was quite explicit about what he wanted me to do. After reading a first rough draft of this chapter, he sent me an email with the following instructions (which I quote verbatim):

"Just a reminder to keep it personal – there should be a lot of Gary in it, your life, your feelings, your struggles, your devotion to education, your challenges, your suppositions, your efforts, your coming up against opposition, skepticism even from your mother, your being debunked, your being amazed, astonished by findings, and then when you repeated experiments and found repeatability in findings, how this all affected you as a person too… this is a personal statement from both of us, not professorial, not like a lecture."

Following Paul's reminder is not the easiest thing for me to do, especially in light of my professional responsibility to science and the Work. To complicate matters, I have been teaching university students since 1968 (primarily at Harvard University, Yale University, and the University of Arizona, plus one semester sabbaticals at the University of British Columbia and the University of California Medical School in San Francisco). As you can probably imagine, the habit of being a professor and giving thousands of university lectures is strongly ingrained in me. To attempt to honor Forry and the Work, what you will read in the next five chapters is partly professional and lecture-like, and partly personal

and memoir-like. Hopefully the professional information will come through strong enough so that you will take what I am sharing seriously. At the same time, I hope that that the personal information will be enlightening and enlivening enough to enable you to experience the great sense of adventure and fun in this scientific and spiritual journey.

II. Becoming an Enlightened Skeptic

As I explain in my books, including *The Afterlife Experiments*, *The Truth About Medium* and *The Sacred Promise*, I was raised to be a skeptic, and I became a good one. In fact, I became an avid skeptic of the questioning kind (no reference intended to *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*).

I often explain to students and colleagues alike that my middle initial is not E (for Edward, picked by my parents) but is actually Q (for Questioner). I discovered that becoming Gary Q. Schwartz was not only extremely practical; it was (and is) great fun as well.

Like Paul, I was brought up in a very Reform Jewish home, where my parents believed it was "ashes to ashes, dust to dust, case closed." I was a good son (for the most part) and took them at their word about the illusion of life beyond death.

In keeping with Paul's email request, let me share a little of my background. My father loved science, my mother loved music, and both of their loves rubbed off on me. My father completed a master's degree in chemical engineering at Columbia University, and he was working on his doctoral dissertation when the politics of World War II interfered with his engineering dreams. At that time the Chairman of the Chemical Engineering Department at Columbia was anti-Semitic, and no students of Jewish descent completed their Ph.D.'s during his tenure.

Instead, my father decided to enter his father's profession. He switched to Columbia's School of Pharmacy and eventually became a pharmacist. I had the privilege to assist my father in his little drug store in North Babylon, Long Island, in the 1950's. I learned how to think critically yet creatively about making medicines (in those days, pharmacists mixed the ingredients and placed them in jelled capsules) or repairing radios and televisions (we had a tube tester in the store, and I learned how to use it).

Though my mother had studied classical piano at the Julliard School of Music, her marriage and pregnancy (with me, and then my brother) interfered with her dreams to become a concert pianist. After my younger brother was

born, she went back to school, majored in education at Hofstra University, and eventually, like Paul's mother, she became an elementary school teacher. My love of learning and commitment to knowledge was inspired in part by her.

As a teenager my three passions were science, music and girls. I participated in every junior and senior high school science fair (a total of six) and generally received A's in science and math. However, my grades in English and foreign languages were abysmal. My teachers said I did not study, which was true in those days, but that was not the whole story. The truth is that I was also mildly dyslexic as well as red-green color blind. This personal challenge made me personally aware of the importance of the mind and perception in daily life.

I played the bass fiddle in the high school jazz band and the tenor drums in the marching band. I played professional electric guitar in multiple rock and roll and jazz bands in high school and college, especially focusing on Motown/soul popular music and funky jazz. And I had a new romance every year, including a beautiful Italian cheerleader and even a professional dancer performing in *Bye Bye Birdie* on Broadway.

Science, music, and romance all involve consciousness, and thanks to my parents I was encouraged to keep an open and curious mind about all of it. When my parents went through severe financial and personal crises, including the bankruptcy of my father's business, their marital separation (they almost divorced), and their respective anxieties and clinical depressions, I experienced their pain and suffering (as well as my brother's and my own), and this deepened my respect for the human mind and health care.

My Western science materialist education at Cornell University, the University of Wisconsin and Harvard University, taught me that consciousness was a creation of patterns of neural functioning. It also reinforced for me, as my parents had always believed, that when the brain dies, consciousness dies, case closed. I was a good university student (for the most part) and accepted what I had been taught. In fact, when I put on my skeptic's hat, I can stand with the best of them and present the best skeptical arguments supporting the belief in the finality of death.

I should confess that when I was a professor at Yale University, and my father died, followed a few years later by my mother dying, I never gave it a second thought that maybe their consciousness – their histories and loves and dreams – continued after they died.

However, over the past twenty years I have been led, slowly but surely, to the opposite conclusion. A set of five factors have collectively led me to

conclude that the probability is extraordinarily high that our personal energy and information – and hence our consciousness – is like the light from distant stars, in that it continues long after the star has died. As you will see in the next chapter, the energy and information of light has a kind of immortality, and the probability is extraordinarily high that the energy and information of our "personal light" has a kind of immortality too.

I will briefly outline below what these five factors are, and then in the next five chapters, factor by factor, explain how each one supports the conclusion that Forrest J Ackerman (Forry) is providing "extraordinary evidence" for life after physical death.

FACT: The Five Additive Criteria Test for Adopting Justified and Responsible Beliefs

I have developed a simple five criteria framework for helping us decide when it is both justified and responsible for us to change our minds and adopt new beliefs. I have summarized this criteria framework in my chapter titled "Truth Seeking and the Process of Responsible Believing: The Five Additive Criteria Test (FACT)" in the book *The Beacon of Mind*, edited by Andrea Blackie and John H. Spencer, Ph.D.

I call this framework FACT, for ease of remembering. I also sometimes refer to it as the Five Fingers Test – in other words, one criterion per finger. As you will see, each of the five factors is actually an essential criterion for reaching a justified and responsible belief.

What is novel about FACT, as described below, are not the individual criteria themselves. You will recognize each of the five criteria immediately, and you should have no difficulty in understanding them.

In my numerous queries of creative scientists and conservative skeptics alike, the consensus is that each of these five criteria is not only fundamental, but that each contributes to the process of valid truth seeking in an additive fashion. As you will see, together they comprise the essence of honest and valid discovery, and they foster what Dr. Carl Sagan has referred to as "the heart of science."

Importantly, thus far no one has proposed that a sixth criterion needs to be added to justify FACT being a valid and responsible system for fostering accurate understanding.

The five essential – and additive – criteria which comprise FACT:

Criterion 1: Reason and Theory
Criterion 2: Scientific Evidence
Criterion 3: Community of Credible/Trustworthy Believers
Criterion 4: Direct Personal Experience, and
Criterion 5: Responsible Skeptical Re-Evaluation of Criteria 1-4

What is novel about the FACT framework are its ramifications for the process of our coming to believe something – especially something new and challenging – in those particular instances when all five criteria have been met simultaneously.

The phrase "when all five criteria have been met simultaneously" is critical here, and it is worth repeating (and repeating again). It is the essence of the letter "A" (additive) in FACT.

What follows is a description of the logic of FACT. Since the following few sentences are a little abstract sounding, you may want to reread them (and even reread them again). A little repetition can sometimes go a long way in deepening our understanding.

Don't worry. As Sherlock Holmes said to his physician partner, "It's elementary, my dear Watson."

Here we go:

IF

1. Both logic and scientific theory support a given belief (Criterion 1),

AND IF

2. Extensive scientific evidence confirms a given belief (Criterion 2),

AND IF

3. There exists a community of highly credible and trustworthy people who hold the belief to be true (Criterion 3),

AND IF

4. You have had direct personal experience which supports the belief (Criterion 4),

AND IF

5. There are no good, reasonable, and responsible reasons for rejecting (i.e., no good reasons to be skeptical about) Criterion 1-4 (Criterion 5),

THEN

6. It is wise and responsible to adopt this new belief and to do so with integrity.

The converse is also true; it is unwise and irresponsible to reject this belief if and when all five essential criteria are simultaneously met.

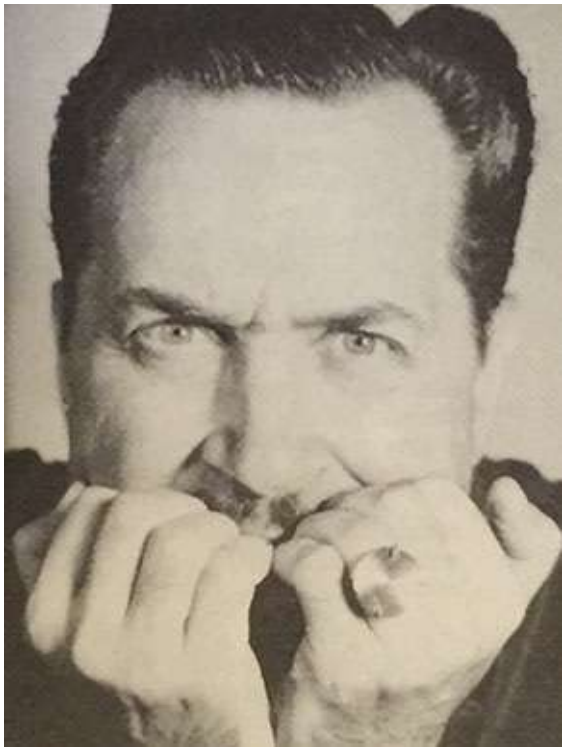
Stated simply and boldly, it turns out to be the case that when all five criteria are simultaneously met concerning a new belief, it behooves us to accept this belief as being most likely true – even if this means that we are forced to give up a long cherished belief.

Conversely, to reject a new belief when all five criteria have been met, in order to hold on to a long cherished belief, is to promote dishonesty and disinformation, which in extreme instances can have disastrous consequences for our health and evolution.

You may be wondering, must all five criteria be met in order for us to hold a responsible belief?

My understanding is no. One can rationally argue that if Criterion 1 plus 2 plus 3 plus 5 have all been met – and Criterion 4 (Direct Personal Experience) has not (or cannot) be met – that the combination of Criteria 1, 2, 3 and 5 can be sufficient to justify that we accept a given belief as probably true (i.e., that it is accurate and valid).

For example, you and I do not actually have to have walked on the moon ourselves to come to the belief that twelve human beings have walked on the moon.



Forrest J Ackerman in one of his typical poses indicating nail-biting suspense, like watching a climactic scene in one of his favorite movies. The suspense is about to mount in our book, but it is a more science-oriented form of suspense, not science fiction.

However, in those special instances where all five criteria have been met, logic requires (i.e., it is essential) that we accept those beliefs as likely being true – whether we prefer those beliefs or not. This is ultimately how creative and responsible science advances, increasing our understanding and evolving our beliefs accordingly (whether or not we like the conclusions).

With this framework in mind, we are ready to examine each of the five criteria in terms of the belief in life after death, in general, and the belief of the continued life of Forry, in particular.

In life, Forry absolutely rejected the reality of an afterlife. Paul Davids proposes, based on the content of all the preceding chapters and all the information in his film, The Life After Death Project, that Forry was incorrect while alive, and that the late Forrest J Ackerman has used means we cannot understand to provide Paul with the evidence and experiences to convey that Forry continues to exist after physical death (i.e., that he has changed his mind.)

Are you are ready to be led, criterion by criterion, to the conclusion that belief in Forry's change of mind is both justified and responsible, and by

extension, that we should change our minds too?

As you read each of the next five chapters, you will come to understand why it was the case that I was fully prepared to be scientifically open to the possibility that not only is Forry still here, but he might actually be responsible for producing many of the incredible phenomena described in Part One of this book.

I hope you like surprises, because the fact is that each of the criteria is associated with unexpected and amazing discoveries, and all five criteria point in one extraordinary direction.

20. DOES SPIRIT ENDURE AFTER PHYSICAL DEATH?

As a general rule, scientists will not believe that something is possible unless there are rational, logical, and theoretical reasons for them to do so. In fact, many mainstream scientists will not seriously consider verifiable and replicable data if the researchers do not know how to explain the observations. They will treat such evidence as outliers or anomalies and either dismiss them or ignore them altogether. This is especially the case if the unpredicted observations seem inconsistent with or appear to challenge outright the scientists' deeply held beliefs and convictions about the nature of reality itself.

I understand this conservative philosophy. Life is complicated, science is equally complicated, and we should focus our efforts on what we can investigate and understand. And we certainly do not want to investigate challenging questions that will jeopardize our ability to get promoted, receive raises, get grants, *etc.* This conservative philosophy is both rational and practical.

Unfortunately, this philosophy does not foster creative and visionary science. Quite the contrary, it discourages making discoveries that go beyond our current understandings and beliefs. And in certain circumstances, it hurts people's lives and the planet as a whole.

Extreme skeptics will often state quite emphatically that not only are there no logical reasons to believe in life after death, but that there are no accepted scientific theories which can explain and even predict that life after death exists. And until the early 1980's, this is what I believed too. However, I subsequently had a number of powerful and empowering learning experiences, driven by straightforward logic and accepted scientific theory, which led me to the exact opposite conclusion.

You do not have to be a rocket scientist to understand these insights. You just have to have a rational and open mind. Are you ready to be surprised? I will briefly share three examples below.

(1) How the methods of neuroscience are actually logically consistent

with the conclusion that the brain is not the creator of consciousness but actually serves as an antenna-receiver-filter for consciousness.

(2) How light has a kind of immortality, and how our light does too. And

(3) How sometimes we need to go into the dark in order to see the light.

I. Why the Brain can be an Antenna-Receiver-Filter for Consciousness

I have described this insight in various places, including my chapter in *The Oxford Handbook of Psychology and Spirituality*, edited by Professor Lisa Miller from Columbia University. If we wish to understand how it is possible for people's consciousness to survive physical death, it is essential to understand why the majority of mainstream neuroscientists typically hold an erroneous belief about the relationship between brain and mind. As you will see, this explanation is part science lecture and part personal memoir.

What is consciousness? Let's make sure we know what we are talking about here. There are numerous definitions of consciousness, but they all relate to the concept of awareness of our personal experiences. We can be conscious/aware of (1) *internal* experiences – sensations in our bodies, our emotional feelings, our thoughts and imaginations, and (2) *external* experiences – including lights, sounds, smells and tastes – our senses.

The concept of mind is broader than consciousness, because the mind includes unconscious mental and emotional processes as well. When we speak of survival of consciousness beyond physical death, we are really speaking of survival of our minds, including the conscious and unconscious processes that define who we are as individuals.

Most neuroscientists working today assume that the brain is the exclusive creator and source of consciousness. As a general rule, mainstream neuroscientists (and scientists in general) assume that consciousness exists because the human brain exists, and that when the brain ceases to exist (as in physical death), so too does consciousness. Case closed.

Using the language of science, the neuroscience community generally assumes that consciousness is some kind of emergent property of complex neural networks and associated biophysical properties of the neurons themselves. One leading theory is that the creation and source of consciousness comes from complex networks of microtubules inside the neurons.

Literally thousands of experiments published in the scientific literature have

been interpreted in this “brain creates consciousness” way. Moreover, this is the way I was taught to think about the brain and consciousness when I was a graduate student in psychology and psychophysiology at Harvard, and I assumed it was true, too.

During my teaching and research careers at Harvard and Yale, I continued to adopt the fundamental interpretation of consciousness as being materially caused by the brain. However, it was only after I moved to the University of Arizona and began conducting formal research on the question of the possibility of survival of consciousness after physical death, that I realized that this well-accepted assumption in neuroscience was both logically and experimentally flawed.

To my chagrin, I discovered that my early undergraduate training in electrical engineering at Cornell University had already taught me this lesson, and that this insight had even been preceded by my high school experiences selling vacuum tubes for TV sets in my father’s pharmacy store.

However, I had not connected the dots then. Nor had I realized the significance of this core flaw in mainstream neuroscience’s logic and reasoning, concerning the assumed role of the brain as being the exclusive creator of consciousness.

Let’s talk about TV sets first, and then we’ll talk about brains. As you will see, “It is elementary, my dear Watson.”

Everyone knows that TV sets do not create the diverse content shown on their screens. TV’s function as receivers of information transmitted through the air or carried via cable.

Let’s keep this “TV as receiver” fact squarely in mind as we review how a TV repair person would go about the process of diagnosing why a given TV set might not be working properly.

As you will discover, the three categories of techniques which TV repair persons use to diagnose TV sets (as receivers of external information) are the identical three categories of techniques which neuroscientists use to investigate brains (and erroneously conclude that brains are creators, rather than receivers, of consciousness).

Yes, you read this correctly: electrical engineers and neuroscientists use the same three categories of techniques and yet they come to radically different conclusions about what they are investigating.

The easiest way to understand the TV repair process is to return to an earlier era when color TV’s were relatively simple and consisted of collections of vacuum tubes, resistors, capacitors and other components.

Let's say that the picture on your color TV set was having difficulty displaying the color green, and you brought the set to a TV repair person (who in my example happens to be female). She could run three kinds (i.e., categories) of tests which I will call (1) The Correlation Test, (2) The Stimulation Test, and (3) The Removal Test.

(1) The Correlation Test: By employing a measuring probe attached to an oscilloscope, a device which displays electrical signals in real time on its screen, the TV repair person could watch the TV screen as she placed the measuring probe on different components, one at a time. Her purpose would be to see which electrical signals displayed on the oscilloscope's screen, as recorded from specific component parts inside the TV, were associated with the impaired green color as seen on the TV screen. In other words, she would be looking for a correlation between what the oscilloscope screen was showing and what was appearing on the TV screen.

(2) The Stimulation Test: By employing a stimulating probe attached to an electronic signal generator, a device which produces electrical signals of variable wave forms and frequencies, the TV repair person would again watch the TV screen as she placed the stimulating probe on different components, one at a time. Her purpose would be to determine which wave forms and frequencies, when applied to specific components with the stimulating probe, altered the greenness on the screen (for example, increased it). In other words, she would be looking to see what effects the signal generator had on what was appearing on the TV screen.

(3) The Removal Test: In the case of vacuum tubes, the TV repair person would once again watch the TV screen as she removed individual tubes. Her purpose would be to determine which tubes, when removed, were specifically associated with changes in greenness on the screen. And finally, in the case of these TV sets, she could even replace old tubes with appropriate new tubes and determine if the green color had been fully restored.

Logic dictates that if the problem with the TV were simple, and only one particular tube happened to be malfunctioning, then all three kinds of tests – correlation, stimulation, and removal – would be directly or indirectly associated with the one tube in question. In fact, if the TV's problem was fortunately restricted to a single tube, not only would all three diagnostic tests point to the same tube, but the successful "treatment" of the faulty greenness would be

demonstrated by the replacement of that single faulty tube with a new fully functioning one.

Now, it should be obvious that these three categories of tests do not individually, or collectively, in any way alter our conclusion that the TV set is a receiver of information provided from an external source. The process of diagnosing the TV's problem using these three categories of tests does not, in any rational or reasonable way, challenge our belief in how a TV set works.

Stated more forcefully, the observations made by the TV repair person using these three types of tests do not encourage or justify that we reject the idea that the TV is a receiver, and instead lead us to believe that the TV set is the primary source/creator of the information displayed on the screen.

This simple point may seem so obvious to you that you are wondering why I am bringing it up in the first place. The reason is because these three categories of tests – correlation, stimulation, and removal – are the identical techniques used by neuroscientists to study the brain. The neuroscientists use the evidence obtained from these three categories of techniques to conclude that the brain is the creator of all of the information associated with behavior and consciousness.

So how, and why, do they do this?

Let's briefly review how neuroscientists come to the currently accepted (and I propose, erroneous) conclusion that the occipital cortex of your brain is responsible for creating your conscious experience of vision. We will conduct a brief set of "thought experiments" below using the three categories of tests. Thought experiments were Einstein's beloved pastime.

It should be obvious that although these hypothetical experiments are based on actual laboratory methods, our purpose here is only for you to imagine them; you should not try to perform these experiments on yourself (or on others).

(1) The Correlation Test: A neuroscientist could attach silver-silver chloride electrodes to the back of your head for the purpose of monitoring your occipital brainwaves using an electroencephalographic (EEG) machine. She could compare your occipital EEGs recorded (A) with your eyes closed, versus (B) with your eyes open while you were looking at a beautiful nature scene, for example. She would likely observe when you were looking at the beautiful picture, as compared to your eyes closed baseline, that your EEG would be showing reduced alpha frequency brainwaves (8-12 cycles per second) and increased beta frequency brainwaves (e.g., 13-20 cycles per second). Moreover, if she then asked you to (C) imagine this beautiful nature scene in your mind while your eyes remained closed, she would observe a similar shift in your

brainwaves (from lower alpha to higher beta frequencies). In other words, she would observe a correlation between what you were seeing (or visually imagining) and specific frequency shifts in EEGs recorded over your occipital cortex.

(2) The Stimulation Test: A neuroscientist could use an external magnetic neurostimulator which has the ability to stimulate neural firing in relatively localized areas of the brain. She could ask you to describe your spontaneous visual experiences (A) during baseline trials with your eyes closed when the magnetic neurostimulator was turned off, and compare them (B) during experimental trials with your eyes closed when the magnetic neurostimulator was turned on. You would be kept blind to which trials were (A) baseline non-stimulation trials and which were (B) experimental stimulation trials. The neuroscientist would likely witness you reporting increased visual imagery during the experimental stimulation trials as compared to the non-stimulation baseline trials.

(3) The Removal Test: If you were a monkey or a rat, for example (no human I know personally would voluntarily choose to be the subject in this kind of experiment, and I doubt you would volunteer either), the neuroscientist could perform a precise surgical procedure to selectively remove portions of your occipital cortex, and document that your behavior on a visual discrimination task (for example, pressing a bar for food on the right when a light on the right went on, and pressing a bar for food on the left when a light on the left went on) was impaired. Or, if you happened to have had a stroke which selectively damaged specific regions of your occipital cortex, the neuroscientist could determine in what ways your visual perception had been impaired (for example, in producing specific areas of blindness).

Now, the neuroscience literature has established incontrovertibly that the visual experience of humans (and other mammals) is: (1) correlated with neural activity in the occipital cortex, (2) produced by stimulation of the occipital cortex, and (3) distorted or destroyed by removal of the occipital cortex. By combining these three sets of highly replicated findings, the majority of neuroscientists have come to the firm (some would even argue, proven) conclusion that visual consciousness is created by the occipital cortex. Case closed.

But is the case really closed?

As we have already explained in our electrical engineering example,

correlation, stimulation, and removal tests do not, by themselves, justify our coming to the conclusion that the TV set has created the image of a beautiful nature scene, for example. We know that the TV set is actually a receiver of the information of the beautiful nature scene; it is not the creator (or source) of the scene displayed on the screen.

Once you understand this simple logic, the same logic dictates that in neuroscience, correlation, stimulation, and removal tests do not, by themselves, justify our coming to the conclusion that the brain has created the image of a beautiful nature scene. Just as the TV set is a receiver, the brain may be a receiver too.

I emphasize the word “may” here.

It is imperative that we all understand that the experimental evidence obtained from correlation, stimulation, and removal tests – whether they are used in electrical engineering or in neuroscience – do not tell us, one way or the other, what the source of the information is.

It logically follows that other kinds of tests must be conducted to determine whether the source of the information is being “created inside” the system, or “coming from outside” the system, whether the system in question is a TV set or a brain.

Do you get the picture (pun intended)?

Let’s repeat the take home message: by themselves, these three sets of tests or experiments – correlation, stimulation, and removal – do not address the core question of whether a given system (TV or brain) happens to be the source of the information it experiences or displays, or whether it has actually received the information it experiences or displays. Additional tests are needed to determine whether something is a creator versus a receiver of the information it expresses.

To whet your appetite, consider the following. As stated in the beginning, if the brain was the primary creator of consciousness, when the brain ceased to function at physical death, so too would consciousness. Case closed.

But if the brain were actually a highly advanced receiver of consciousness (like the contemporary Smart TV), then if a given TV set ceased to function, consciousness would logically continue to function (since it was external to the TV and was received by it). The information could be picked up by other suitably tuned televisions, and the information could continue to grow and evolve.

So logic and theory clearly tells us that it is possible that the brain may be like a TV, a receiver of information.

The question then arises, is there any information outside the brain for the

brain (or future technology) to receive?

And if there is any information outside the brain to receive, is the information alive (for example, is it a "living soul")? And if the information is alive, can this living information grow and evolve?

We will review some of this evidence in the next chapter.

II. How Light, Including Our Light, Has a Kind of Immortality

We are now going to shift gears and switch from brains and TV sets to light and energy, stars and souls. I first described this insight and how it emerged in my first book, *The Living Energy Universe*, and its implications for survival of consciousness in my second book, *The Afterlife Experiments*. Because this insight is so fundamental, it is necessary that I share it again here. This was one of the most surprising, enlightening and lifealtering experiences and insights in my life. In brief, here is what happened.

It was the early 1980's, and I had been invited to give a "Distinguished Presidential Address" at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. For some reason I had the good fortune to stay in a penthouse room at the top of a high rise hotel looking out onto English Bay. I had been reading about striking parallels between quantum physics and mystical beliefs in a visionary book entitled *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* by Gary Zukav. Wu Li is from the Chinese meaning "patterns of organic (or organized) energy."

I had been struggling with the concept in quantum physics about how light – believed by most physicists to be a "massless" thing (i.e., to have no mass at rest) – could sometimes appear to act like a massless "particle" localized in space, and other times act like a massless "wave" distributed in space.

My mind was reeling as I attempted to comprehend how "material-less things" could (1) behave as if they were localized (but moving) in space (be particles) and (2) be distributed in space (be waves) depending upon the precise context in which they appeared.

Zukav suggested that there was a "spirit-like" and "soul-like" nature to light.

It was about one a.m. I was alone. I was in bed, naked. I got up, turned on a light, walked over to the penthouse window, and looked westward out over English Bay. The night sky happened to be clear and cloudless, and a full moon was visible which lit up the sky and surrounding areas. I did not see any obvious stars, because I was in a major city, and the moon was present.

To my right (looking north and west) I could see many thousands of houses going up the mountain. To my left (looking south and west) I could also see many thousands of houses extending along the peninsula, which ended with the campus of the university.

I took special notice of the fact that lights were on in numerous houses. You can understand that I was quite conscious of the nature of light at that moment in my life, as I was pondering the essence of the theory of massless particles of light which sometimes behaved as waves.

I happened to realize, and then, since I didn't have a reasonably powerful telescope on hand, I actually imagined that I could use a "thought-experiment created telescope" to look inside the windows of each of those houses. I gazed at various houses, and I wondered what I might be seeing going on through the windows.

Logic tells us that if I could look through each of those windows with my telescope and see people inside their respective houses, then the individual patterns of light traveling through the people's respective windows had to be traversing through the air and ultimately going into my eyes.

Take a moment to ponder this. The patterns of photons traversing each of their windows from inside their respective houses were travelling through the air, reaching my hotel, traversing my window, and eventually entering my eyes. All of this light was in fact reaching my eyes; my imagined telescope served to magnify specific portions of the light associated with specific windows.

Using the same logic, I then reasoned that if I could see people through their windows with my imagined telescope, that in principle if they had suitable telescopes, and they pointed their telescopes at my window, they could see me! This implied that the individual patterns of light reflected off my body would be reaching each of their respective windows and would be doing so virtually simultaneously (determined by their distance from me and the speed of light).

I realized that multiple tiny little patterns of light (images) of me were not only going into each of the windows that happened to be lit, but were going through all of the windows from all of the houses which were in the line-of-sight from my window.

We are talking about many hundreds of thousands of windows in my line of sight, and hence many hundreds of thousands of tiny patterns of light reflected off my body reaching and passing through all of these windows.

And then it hit me, and it literally took my breath away. Words cannot express the surprise, awe, confusion, wonder, magic, and majesty of my experience at that moment.

I might mention that as I am writing these words, I can vividly imagine myself back in Vancouver, looking out that full length window and having that extraordinary “aha” experience. I can feel a tingling sensation throughout my body, and I can remember how the hair stood up on my arms.

This is what hit me. And I mean hit me.

I realized that the patterns of light being reflected off my body were not simply going into all the line of sight windows up the mountain to the right and down the peninsula to the left, but they were also going out into space.

And that one second after I had this thought, I realized that the patterns of light from my body had literally travelled more than 186,282 miles into space!

Think about this. I not only felt the photons of myself 186,282 miles into space, but I also experienced my reflected photons filling the entire 186,282 miles of space between the physical me in Vancouver and the specific photons that had travelled one second after I had had the thought.

Then another second went by, and I realized that those patterns of light from my body had now travelled more than 372,564 (two times 186,282) miles into space!

And once in space, I realized that the photonic information associated with my body (like the video in the movie *Contact*) would keep going and going (and going).

Logic and theory tell us that with every second, those precise patterns of light originally produced in the early 1980’s (save for those that have collided with objects like stars, planets, and asteroids) have continued to expand out into the vacuum of space. We can calculate approximately how far into space those patterns of light have travelled since my transformative scientific-mystical moment in Vancouver.

Let’s be conservative and use a 30 year time frame (since my transformative scientific-mystical moment with the light began in the early 1980’s and I performed the calculation in 2015). Here’s the calculation:

186,282 miles/second
X
60 seconds/minute
X
60 minutes/hour
X
24 hours/day

X
365 days/year
X
30 years

=

176,237,674,560,000 miles.

That's more than 176 trillion miles in distance, and many more trillions of miles in width as well.

I trust you realize that my subjective experience, combined with its accompanying realization, was not mere fantasy or speculation. My experience integrated (1) straightforward logic, with (2) well accepted electromagnetic theory in physics, as well as (3) measurements from applied optical engineering.

For example, it is well known today that orbiting spy satellites can detect and image individual persons walking on the earth, and this includes you and me. This means that precise patterns of light associated with our bodies must be reaching the super-sensitive cameras functioning in sophisticated satellites positioned in outer space.

Of course, the intensity (i.e., magnitude) of our personal reflected light patterns is miniscule when compared to the magnitude of light produced by individual galaxies of stars. But this misses the point. The fact is that the immense intensity of the information associated with the light from specific galaxies of stars billions of light years away, by the time they have reached the camera in a spy satellite, is tiny when compared to the intensity of our reflected light patterns when they reach the camera in the satellite.

Think about this – we, and everything else, are continuously reflecting our individual patterns of light out into the vast vacuum of space. Even more amazing is that we, and everything else, are continuously emitting patterns of photons, not only in infrared and ultraviolet frequency bands, but in other frequency bands as well (e.g., in gigahertz frequency bands associated with satellite TV's, as described in my book *The Energy Healing Experiments*).

Please understand that the concept of a photon, according to well established electromagnetic theory in physics, is not limited to the sliver of electromagnetic frequencies we experience as visible light, but the full range of electromagnetic frequencies which exist in the Universe (from super low frequencies of gravity to super high frequencies of cosmic rays).

If this stupendous complexity of photonic information seems mentally overwhelming to you, welcome to the club. Since I was a child, I have been conceptually overwhelmed by the realization that millions of people can simultaneously be looking at the sky, awaiting the appearance of a comet, for example, and everyone can in principle see the comet at the same time.

Moreover, if the comet happened to be passing near what we call the Big Dipper, then millions of people would be seeing the Big Dipper at the same time as well. Moreover, since most of us have two functioning eyes, this means that there are two times the millions of comets, as well as two times the millions of tiny Big Dippers, entering the pairs of millions of eyes of the people watching the comet.

Now consider the following. Just as billions of individual stars comprising a galaxy do not lose their individuality in the vacuum of space, our unique patterns of light do not lose their individuality in the vacuum of space either. Photons are photons, and information is information; hence, preservation of information is preservation of information, regardless of its source. The fact that the complexity of all this is conceptually overwhelming is beside the point.

The take-home message should be obvious. If the photonic energy and information of distant stars can be preserved in the vacuum of space for billions of years, then in principle our reflected and emitted photonic energy and information can continue as well. I said it once but it bears repeating: photons are photons, energy is energy, and information is information. From an electromagnetic point of view, it is as if the Universe is designed to be a cosmic memory storage system of indescribable size and complexity.

The skeptic might say “So what? Just because the photons are there doesn’t mean they are all connected to us or accessible to us.” That is true. We need additional concepts such as quantum entanglement and quantum systems theory to understand how this information continues to exist as a whole and is accessible to us. This analysis is beyond the scope of this chapter. What matters here is that you understand that the information is there. The fact is that unlike the physical body, which dies, the history of our energy and information persists.

And this verifiable persistence is nothing short of mind boggling.

III. Going into the Dark to See the Light

You are about to learn an insight about super low intensities of light – be they associated with distant stars or hypothesized living souls – which can only be seen under the “right” conditions. We will consider the question, is there a

similarity between seeing the dim light from distant stars and seeing the dim light of the energy of living souls.

I can vividly recall the night that I learned the profound lesson: “Sometimes we need to go into the dark in order to see the light.” The funny thing is that I was not alone when I had this insight. It was around midnight on a bitter cold winter night. It was maybe 15 degrees Fahrenheit. I was sitting in “Goat Haven” with my three pet French Alpine goats named after three of my favorite operas – Puccini’s *Tosca* and *Manon*, and Verde’s *Figaro*.

Goat Haven was named after New Haven. It was built behind our two story colonial home adjacent to a heavily wooded area in Guilford, Connecticut. The goats’ area was maybe 100 feet wide by 80 feet deep. It included a large goat house painted white with red circles which matched a seven foot tall clown sculpture painted white with red circles by the artisan. The goat house had a specially built long ramp which stretched from the ground to the roof. The goats loved running up and down the ramp, jumping on the roof and bleating with apparent glee.

I love animals and have a special fondness for goats. People who know goats appreciate that they are like dogs – intelligent, clever, stubborn, loyal and super loving. I had been gifted these goats when they were just kids for my 40th birthday. They weighed maybe thirty pounds each then. Within a year they each weighed over a hundred and eighty pounds. Standing on all fours, their heads reached my upper chest. When they decided to put their front legs on my shoulders, they were taller than me!

Every morning before I went to Yale, and every night after dinner, I would put on my overalls and spend quality time with the three of them. They were lap goats. They loved it when I would sit on the front stoop of their home, and they would take turns, sort of, jumping all over me.

Sometimes I would go out a third time, just before I went to sleep. It got very dark back there, because Goat Haven was nestled in our backyard, and our backyard was surrounded by woods. In the dead of the winter, the trees had no leaves and the night sky was visible all around me. I wore a down ski jacket with a hood and fur-lined gloves. I looked nothing like a Yale professor.

That night there were no clouds. There was no visible moon either. Sitting with the goats, I looked up and saw thousands of stars everywhere I looked. As I gazed at the stars, I remembered that what I was seeing was a history of star light that had been traveling for many millions of light years. I was not sure whether I could see any satellites, but I knew they were there.

As far as I could tell, none of the goats was sharing my cosmic experience.

They were busy nuzzling me and had no obvious interest in the stars.

I could clearly see the Big Dipper, and I knew that somehow the patterns of photons created by those stars were entering each of the pupils of my eyes. I was inspired to ponder the fact that this vast expanse of space, with its thousands of visible stars – as detected by my naked eyes – was entering a very tiny area determined by the pupils of my eyes.

It then occurred to me that if the goats had been interested, they too could have looked up at the sky, and the patterns of photons created by Big Dipper stars would have entered simultaneously each of the pupils of their respective eyes.

I then imagined that my backyard was like a small football stadium filled with thousands of Yale students, and that each of them was looking up at the Big Dipper at the same time. I realized that somehow the patterns of photons created by the Big Dipper stars had to be simultaneously entering the thousands of pairs of their respective pupils. That's a huge number of tiny big dipper photon patterns simultaneously entering my backyard!

As I pondered this amazing property of light, it occurred to me that we could only witness the Big Dipper at night. During the day, I never saw the Big Dipper, and as far as I knew, neither did anyone else.

I wondered, what happened to all of the star light?

What happened to the thousands of stars we could see with the naked eye, or the trillions of stars we could see with present day telescopes?

Did all of the patterns of star light simply disappear during day, only to reappear at night?

Or, was all of it still there, but we could not see it because we were blinded by the brightness of the sun? I quickly realized that this was the mechanism. This explained why we could see so many more stars from the secluded goat house in Goat Haven than the Yale Alumni House in the city of New Haven.

And then it hit me. If we couldn't see the tiny intensities of the star's light during the day because of the brightness of the sun, maybe we couldn't see the tiny intensities of the hypothesized spirit's light during the day for the same reason. This led to the simple yet profound conclusion that "sometimes we need to go into the dark in order to see the light." That's the sound bite, the take home message – and this would include the light (i.e., photonic energy and information) theoretically associated with spirit.

I wondered, was this why people went into dimly lit rooms, or even caves, to better connect with spirit? Was this why people learned to meditate, to quiet their minds and bodies, in order to better register the subtle energies of spirit?

All this occurred in my mind as I looked at the stars, and then at my goats, and smiled. Though at the time I knew that this had been a special moment, I had no idea then, that this spontaneous experience would have any professional or practical consequences. It would be almost two decades before I would discover that this simple take-home message provided one of the essential keys for developing a reliable technology for seeing and communicating with spirit, and that someone I had never heard of named Forrest J Ackerman would end up using this equipment as well.

IV. An Emerging Theory of the Physics of Spirit

If we take a moment to step back and review what we have learned in this chapter, there are compelling logical and theoretical reasons to entertain the hypothesis that (1) our minds are separate from our brains, and that (2) the hypothesized energy and information of spirits may be like the light from distant stars, having a kind of immortality as well as the ability to be detected under the right conditions.

In fact, today there is enough compelling logic and theory to justify the writing of an entire book about an emerging theory of the physics of spirit. I mention this to highlight that FACT Criterion 1 – Logic and Theory – clearly points toward the survival of consciousness hypothesis. One down, four to go.

Some of you may be skeptical about one or more of the exemplary insights I have described above. Don't worry. After we consider the next three criteria, we will put on our skeptical hats and responsibly see if there are valid and compelling reasons to reject the totality of the insights and evidence comprising Criteria 1-4.

As you will see in the next chapter, the experimental evidence (Criterion 2) is consistent with the logic and theory (Criterion 1). No single criterion – like no single finger – is sufficient to fully grasp the afterlife hypothesis. It takes all five fingers to grasp it and hold it firm.

21. WHEN AFTERLIFE RESEARCH SUPPORTS BELIEF

Now that you understand that there are multiple logical and theoretical reasons for us to be open to the possibility of life after death (Criterion 1), we can consider the multiple areas of research (Criterion 2) which provide compelling support for these rational reasons. The scope of this research is so great and deep that when we see the "big picture" of the research, the totality of the evidence is quite striking.

Together, these two criteria are like a "victory" sign, and Forry is a stellar exemplar heralding this emerging victory.

The reader should understand that no single area of research, by itself, is sufficient to serve as "proof" of life after death. However, when the combination of diverse areas of research is viewed as a whole, the research becomes an exemplary illustration of the well-known statement: "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

Paul has requested that I mostly draw from my own research to show you how scientific experiments provide compelling support for the logic and theory. The question arises: how can I cover three books of research in a single chapter and do the evidence justice? The answer is: I can't. What I can do is share a few striking examples which will help you understand how far our research has come.

But first, let's examine the "big picture" of the research and appreciate how big it really is.

I. Five Big Research Areas Supporting Life After Death

There are a number of specific areas of research, each of which provides impressive support for life after death. I will emphasize five of them here, and we can use our five fingers to remember the five areas as well.

We have already reviewed in Chapter 20 how the five additive criteria test

(FACT) for responsible and justified beliefs can be mapped on to the fingers of our hands. Let's now reserve the fingers on our left hands for FACT, and the fingers on our right hands for the Big Five Research Areas. This way you potentially can envision the big picture painted in these chapters as a unified whole.

You can imagine using your fingers 1 - 4 on your right hand for After Death Communication, Near Death Experience, Reincarnation and Mediumship Research, respectively, and reserve the thumb on your right hand for Spirit Communication Technology.

Here we go:

Research Area 1: There is extensive survey research concerning the frequency of different kinds of after death communication (ADC) experienced by people worldwide. Probably the most famous of these is The ADC Project (http://www.after-death.com/) of Bill and Judy Guggenheim as summarized in their book *Hello from Heaven*. The types of experiences Paul reports associated with Forry in Part One of this book are prototypic of the types of experiences reported in The ADC Project.

Research Area 2: There is extensive clinical research for the occurrence of profound spiritual experiences that people may have during periods of time that they were near physical death. These are called Near Death Experiences, or NDEs for short. The father of NDE research is Dr. Raymond Moody as reported in his classic book *Life After Life*. One of the most comprehensive medical studies of NDEs was performed by Dr. Pim Von Lommel, a cardiologist, as reported in his book *Consciousness Beyond Life*.

Research Area 3: There is extensive field research for validated reincarnation evidence in adults and children. The hypothesis of reincarnation requires that consciousness continues beyond physical death in order for it potentially to reincarnate. The most distinguished of this research was performed by the late Dr. Ian Stephenson and his colleagues in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Virginia (http://www.medicine.virginia.edu/clinical/departments/psychiatry/sections/cspp/page). This work has been continued by Dr. Jim Tucker as described in his book *Return to Life*.

Research Area 4: There is extensive laboratory research documenting how some mediums can obtain accurate information about people who have died. A

book considered to be a classic in this area of research is *The Afterlife Experiments*, and it happens to have been written by me. Though I have performed more laboratory experiments testing research mediums than any currently living university scientist, other research teams have independently replicated our findings including Dr. Emily Kelly and her colleagues at the University of Virginia, Dr. Julie Beischel and her colleagues at the Windbridge Institute, and the late Dr. Archie Roy and his colleagues (formerly at the University of Glasgow in Scotland). As you will recall from Part One of this book, the combined evidence provided by the three mediums who connected with Forry is quite impressive (also demonstrated by other mediums since).

Research Area 5: There is a growing body of both field and laboratory research documenting how contemporary electronic technology can be used to detect the presence of spirit and even serve as potential spirit communication technology. Sometimes called by the acronym ITC – or Instrumental Trans-Communication – as illustrated by the pioneering work of Mark Macy (http://www.itcbridge.com/index.html) and described in his book *Miracles in the Storm*. ITC is the least well-developed of the five areas. Nonetheless, state-of-the-art research published in my laboratory clearly illustrates the promise of this research, and I will share a highly controlled experiment which demonstrates the power of this area of research. As you recall, Forry gives us very strong indications of having participated with us as we have used this equipment.

Yes, it takes the combination of all five research areas to see the Big Picture of life after death and metaphorically hang this grand picture on the wall. As we have said before, it helps to have five functional fingers to fully grasp something and hold it firm.

Now that you see the Big Picture of the Big Five research areas, we will focus on research areas 4 and 5. You are about to see why I am thoroughly convinced that both of these areas of research are genuine and deserve our most careful (and grateful) consideration.

II. Some Mediums are Real

Since as I have mentioned I was raised and educated to believe that it was “ashes to ashes, dust to dust, case closed,” you can understand that originally my firm opinion was that any psychic or medium who claimed to communicate with the deceased either had to be (1) a fraud (fooling us) or (2) delusional (fooling

themselves). Since I was already trained in clinical psychology, I knew how to diagnose delusions. However, I was not trained in how to be a fake medium, and therefore I did not know how to detect a fraud.

You know the motto: if you can't beat them, join them. And so I did. I purchased secret books (not readily available to the general public) about how to become a fake medium, and I read them carefully. I took a formal course in how to be a fake medium. Humility aside, I became a pretty good fake medium. Hence, I now knew how to design experiments which invalidated all their secret tricks. And when I conducted these experiments, some people who claimed to be mediums passed these stringent tests with flying colors.

From the very first medium I tested in 1996 up to the present moment, the truth is that I am continually amazed when genuine mediums do really good readings. I always feel a mixture of awe and wonder along with the experience of incredulity.

It never ceases to amaze me that certain people can apparently communicate with hypothesized spirits – none of whom I can see or hear – and you probably can't either. One of my dearest colleagues, Dr. Robert Stek, once called me the "Helen Keller of Afterlife Research," and that is exactly how I feel.

My experience described in Part One, witnessing Catherine Yunt and Orit Ish Yemeni Tomer do their readings for Paul Davids, was no exception. I felt awed, amazed and incredulous concerning what I had witnessed with my own eyes relating to Forry.

After three books of published research, plus an even greater amount of unpublished research, it is frustrating (to put it mildly) to be limited by space to highlight only one example to help you to understand how I have come to conclude, beyond a shadow of doubt, that some mediums are real.

By "real" I mean that these mediums are not using either of the two categories of fraudulent techniques: (1) "hot" reading tricks, getting information about the people ahead of time via the internet, detectives, *etc.* or (2) "cold" reading tricks, getting information from visual and auditory cues provided by the sitters (the people wishing to hear from their deceased loved ones).

Moreover, the findings with these mediums cannot be explained in terms of the two categories of bias: (1) "sitter rater bias" (which means the person sitting for a reading with the medium may exaggerate the value of the medium's information) or (2) experimenter bias.

Finally, the totality of the findings cannot be explained in terms of two categories of speculated paranormal explanations: (1) mind reading of the sitter

(the medium reading the mind of the sitter rather than of the deceased), or (2) "super-psi" (meaning super psychic functioning – for example, the medium retrieving static ("dead") information from the "vacuum" of space rather than the dynamic ("living") minds of the deceased.

So how can I be so sure that some mediums are real? I will summarize one sophisticated experiment that even the most skeptical experimenter will admit is as close to foolproof as possible. If any single experiment of the dozens I have run in this area convinces me that some mediums are real, this is it. Here we go.

III. The Power of the "Triple-Blind" Design

We used a very novel experimental design, one that is rarely used in either psychological or medical research. It is called a "triple-blind" design. Conventional medical research typically employs double-blind designs. Let's consider what a double-blind design is first and then we'll see why a more complex, triple-blind design was desirable in mediumship research.

Let's say we wish to determine whether a given drug has clinical effects above and beyond placebo effects. Since it is well known that placebo effects often occur to various degrees, we need to determine whether the effects of the hypothesized drug are greater than those due to belief or expectancy.

Prospective patients are told that they will either be receiving the hypothesized active drug or a placebo, and that in order to determine the relative efficacy of the predicted drug, they need to be kept blind as to knowing what they are receiving. In other words, during the experiment, the patients are not allowed to know whether they are receiving the drug or placebo.

To be sure that the patients cannot know what they are receiving, and also to insure that the provider cannot inadvertently influence the findings, the providers are kept blind as to whether they are giving the patients the drug or placebo. Since the patients and the providers are both blind to who is receiving the drug and who is receiving the placebo, this is termed double-blind.

In the majority of our mediumship experiments, the research designs were double-blind. In these studies, (1) the mediums were kept blind to the identity of the sitters and knew nothing of the details of the sitter's deceased loved ones. Also, (2) the experimenters were purposely kept blind to details regarding the sitter's deceased loved ones. This insured that the experimenters could not inadvertently influence what the mediums were receiving. Since the mediums and the experimenters were both blind to information regarding the deceased loved ones, the experiments were double-blind.

However, (3) the sitters were not blind to information. Since the sitters were always present when their readings took place, it was conceivable that their beliefs and expectations might have been coloring or biasing their scoring.

How could we eliminate the possibility that sitter rater biases might explain the results? How could we make the sitters "blind"? The solution was simple in principle – we would not allow the sitters to be present when their readings took place. Instead, we would employ a proxy sitter to replace the sitters – in this instance, an experimenter blind to details regarding the sitters' deceased loved ones.

Implementing the solution was a bit complicated in practice. In brief, we would match pairs of sitters (who do not know each other) who wished to hear from a specific loved one of a given sex but were of different ages when they died. Let's say the sitters were named Mary and Joan. Mary wished to hear from someone named Bob, and Joan wished to hear from someone named John. Bob died relatively young, in his early 20's; John died relatively old, let's say in his 70's.

Mary and Joan would be informed individually that their readings would be conducted, say on a Wednesday night, and that they should in their minds invite their loved ones to the laboratory for that night. The experimenter who served as the "proxy sitters" would only be given the first names of the deceased persons in question – in this instance, Bob and John. Save for knowing the names Bob and John, this experimenter would be blind to the details of these deceased persons.

The experimenter would then call a given research medium and begin the experiment by requesting that the medium attempt to receive any information she could about a deceased person named Bob. Since there are probably millions of deceased people named Bob, this would not help the medium. The primary purpose is to enable the medium to distinguish between the two specific spirits who were invited to participate in this session – Bob and John.

After recording whatever information the medium received from this open-ended request, the experimenter would ask the medium a series of specific questions about Bob such as: What did Bob look like? How did Bob die? What did Bob do professionally? What were Bob's hobbies? In other words, seeking the kinds of specific information that would enable Mary to recognize Bob.

After a break, the identical procedure would be repeated, this time for John. By repeating the same questions for John (e.g., "What did John look like?") this would provide the kinds of information that would enable Joan to recognize John.

After the readings were completed, the information would be transcribed. Each specific piece of information (e.g., names, dates, locations, situations, etc.) would be listed, item by item, separately for Bob and John. One list would be labelled A, the other B. The pair of lists A and B would be mailed to both Mary and Joan.

Mary and Joan would be told that one of the lists was for their reading, and that the other list was someone else's reading. However, they would not be told which list – A or B – was their reading. This is key – it insured that Mary and Joan were blind to which was their reading.

Mary would then score every item in both lists based upon her knowledge of Bob, and Joan would score every item in both lists based upon her knowledge of John. They would then sum the scores separately for lists A and B, make a global rating of degree of fit for their respective loved one separately for lists A and B, and then pick which of the two lists they thought was their respective deceased loved one, if any.

In the actual experiment, there were eight blinded research mediums, one blinded proxy-sitter experimenter, and sixteen blinded sitters. To my amazement, when the data was carefully analyzed, the statistics revealed that the blinded sitters correctly identified their respective readings significantly greater than chance. Moreover, when results for the individual mediums were analyzed, six of the eight showed the predicted effect under these difficult experimental conditions, and three of the six were "off the charts" in terms of their accuracy.

In other words, even under rigorously controlled triple-blind conditions that ruled out all conventional (and most paranormal) explanations for a successful reading, our group of skilled research mediums could obtain significantly accurate information, and a few could do so extraordinarily.

I first reported the results of this compelling experiment in my book *The Truth About Medium*. The more detailed findings were subsequently published as a peer reviewed scientific paper in *EXPLORE: The Journal of Science and Healing*.

You may be wondering, why did my co-author, Dr. Julie Beischel, who was at the time a post-doctoral fellow in my laboratory, and I choose to publish the results of this exceptional experiment in *EXPLORE* rather than a more conservative and respected journal like *Psychological Science?* The answer is that we tried to publish the paper in *Psychological Science*, but the editor decided not to accept it.

Why did the editor elect not to publish our paper? Was it because of limitations or flaws in our methodology, results and/or conclusions? No. In fact,

the reviewers acknowledged that the research was very well designed, appropriately analyzed and responsibly and carefully interpreted.

So why reject the paper? What the editor said was that this research was not "innovative enough" to justify publication in the journal.

You may be wondering, was this the real reason? How many triple-blind mediumship experiments have been published in a mainstream scientific journal? The answer was, and still is (as of 2016), none. What the editor was saying implicitly, rather than explicitly, was that this research was too controversial to be published in his journal, and as the official gate-keeper he was not going to allow this research to appear in his journal (and therefore be read by mainstream psychological scientists). Was it in effect too "visionary" in its subject matter and approach to be tolerated?

Such is the politics of mainstream science. What matters here is that you understand that the triple-blind experimental design serves as a stringent test of the question "Are any mediums real?" and the answer is a resounding yes.

It is noteworthy that after Dr. Beischel completed her post-doctoral fellowship, she and her colleagues conducted a "quintuple-blind" replication and extension experiment. That's right, five levels of blindness (we need not attempt to explain the extra blindness here). What is important is that their experiment validated the findings from our triple-blind experiment.

Once you know the scientific evidence from contemporary mediumship research – especially these multi-blind experiments – it's hard to maintain the hardline skeptical belief that mediumship is impossible, and therefore that all mediums must be frauds or fakes.

IV. Some Spirits can be Detected with Technology

As amazing and powerful as mediumship research can be, it can still be argued that this kind of evidence is not sufficient to allow us to conclude that consciousness survives physical death, and therefore that Forry's consciousness has as well. No matter how rigorous and sophisticated the research is, or how credible and ethical the mediums are, it is natural for us to question the trustworthiness of people's personal experiences – be they mediums, sitters, or even experimenters.

Is there any way to obtain independent, "hard" evidence that a "deceased" person's energy and information continues after physical death?

The answer is yes. Using state-of-the-art technology capable of recording

single photons of light in pitch black conditions, for example, it is possible with the aid of collaborating spirits – whom (as Paul revealed in Chapter 11, "Mysteries of the Missing") we sometimes call "Departed Hypothesized Co-Investigators" or DHCI's – to document their continued presence.

Here is how I summarized this research in the documentary *The Life After Death Project*:

We have been conducting research with state of the art technology, devices for example that can detect super-low levels of light in pitch black, to be able to detect the actual energy and presence of spirit under controlled conditions. I refer to the kind of conditions that meet the highest standards of scientific research. When we do controlled experiments with mediums and those whose loved ones have passed, everything goes through human subject committees – it's called IRB, Internal Review Boards – they have to approve all the rules, and we follow it to the letter. However, one of the great advantages of doing research with technology, is that there's nobody to get human subject approval for, because there are no human subjects involved. You have people in the lab, working with equipment, getting information from the "Other Side."

In a series of experiments now published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, we have data documenting that specific spirits can be invited into the laboratory and be present during particular spirit invitation trials – that they generate increased, measurable effects on light. We have one system that is used to record single photons of light in pitch black. It is essentially a box within a box within a box. Spirit has to be able to go through the different layers of the box, and eventually then produce or release photos that will then be picked up by the sensor. Now for the record, how does a spirit get into the room in the first place? They have to be able to pass through what we call material objects.

The sensors that I've been using with the Vernier system measure other properties – properties other than light. It includes magnetic fields, electrical fields, radiation, temperature – and then I started applying it to the unique applications of designing software that can be used for the online detection of yesses and no's and criterion patterns and displaying it in real time.

You can't use the photon-detection box-within-a-box system for communication, you can only use this for verification and detection. The photomultiplier, or the magnetic sensors or the radiation sensors or other sensors we are exploring can operate in real time. The conclusion that I've come to is that any supersensitive technology potentially can be used for at least a "yes-no"

indication of apparent spirit effects.

I first presented findings of such "spirit communication technology" research in chapters 13 and 14 of my book *The Sacred Promise*, and I published foundational peer reviewed scientific papers in 2010 and 2011 in the journal *EXPLORE*. In the process of doing this research, I have discovered that certain DHCI's are more detectible with technology than others. These individual differences were observed right at the outset, and they are discussed in my 2010 and 2011 papers in *EXPLORE*.

Sadly we cannot review this body of research here. What I can do is highlight the most persuasive experimental methodology which has convinced me that there is a real effect here, and you can then come to your own conclusion. If any single research methodology has been a "tipping point" for me, this is it.

The research involves the measurement of patterns of photon activity using a super sensitive CCD (charge coupled device) camera system cooled to -77 degrees Centigrade under experimental conditions, where none of the researchers were physically present at the laboratory, and the entire experimental session was run by computer. The instructions for the DHCI's were given by PowerPoint on a big screen TV, and simultaneous audio recordings of the experimenter.

Yes, you read that correctly.

Our Departed Hypothesized Co-Investigators (DHCI's) were invited to go to the laboratory at night, and follow the detailed instructions given by the computer. And yes, the research indicates that DHCI's can see and hear information in the physical world. Neither I nor anyone on my staff was physically present when the data were collected.

Why did we resort to conducting such a novel controlled experiment? The reason is that despite the replicability of observing apparent spirit detection effects when specific DHCI's were requested to be present with the technology, skeptical thinkers raised the question about whether the equipment might somehow be detecting the experimenter's intentions and expectations rather than the energy and consciousness of the DHCI's. For the record, I was one of those skeptical thinkers, and I wanted to know the answer myself. The only way to address this question was to test it under highly controlled conditions.

In the 2011 experiments, we invited two DHCI's named Susy and Sophia to participate. As described in *The Sacred Promise*, these spirits had previously participated in multiple experiments in the laboratory. The way the experiment

worked was as follows. Around 4 p.m., an experimenter (not me) read out loud a standardized script which essentially said:

"Dear Susy and Sophia. We will be running an experimental session tonight. Please come to the laboratory at 11 pm and follow the instructions given on the PowerPoint monitor. This is the same experiment we previously did when I was physically present during the day, only now it is at night and I will not be present. I will return tomorrow morning and download the data. Thank you very much, and good luck tonight."

The experimenter would then leave the laboratory, locking the doors behind him.

It is worth noting that this particular experimenter was somewhat skeptical about whether these Departed Hypothesized Co-Investigators could do this at night, by themselves. In fact, he was even somewhat skeptical about whether DHCI's were involved when he originally ran the experiments "live" (when he was physically present conducting the experiments). He is not a medium, and at least at the time he worked for me and ran the experiments, he favored standard paranormal explanations – i.e., effects produced by the mind of the experimenter – rather than spiritual explanations (e.g., DHCI's).

At 11 p.m., the computer program would come to life. The camera was already warmed up and ready to go. The computer would then pick a random number which would set the actual time that the experiment would begin. It might be 11:15 p.m., 11:40 p.m., whenever. The DCHI's were informed of this experimental procedure. This procedure insured that not only was no one physically present, but that none of us knew when the experiment would actually begin. Speaking for myself, I am typically asleep by 11 p.m.

Let's say the computer picked midnight. At this point the PowerPoint would come on and the computer would play a sound file previously recorded by the experimenter which said "Welcome Susy" (or "Welcome Sophia" – who came first, Susy or Sophia was determined by the computer). The computer would show a picture of the DHCI, and also have written instructions as well. The step by step instructions would be presented, in sequence. The first thirty minutes would be a pre-baseline period, and the DHCI would remain in the control room. The second 30 minutes would be the spirit detection period during which time the DHCI would be requested to go into the next room, a darkroom containing a smaller light tight chamber which housed the $40,000 super sensitive camera system, so that the camera potentially could detect her presence. The third thirty minutes would be a post-baseline period during which time the DHCI would return to the adjacent control room. After a break, this

sequence would be repeated for the other DHCI. The computer automatically named the camera image files and saved them to disk.

This protocol was repeated for a total of four nights. In addition, four nights of data were collected with the same data collection, except the DHCI's were not invited to show up to the laboratory. These "no spirit" control sessions allowed us to determine whether the effects we observed in the DHCI sessions could be due to unanticipated changes in the camera and/or computer over the course of the night.

The results were truly amazing. They were so strong, and so clear, that I requested that the experimenter run a second experiment with three more DHCI sessions. Moreover, at the request of a blind reviewer of the first draft of the scientific paper, I requested that the experiment increase the number of "no spirits" control sessions from three to twelve.

What did we find?

In brief, we found that the analyses revealed that the thirty minute DHCI presence (i.e., middle) trials were associated with increased brightness in what are called two dimensional fast Fourier analyses of the images recorded by the CCD camera system, when compared to the thirty minute pre and post "no spirit" baseline trials.

What this means, in plain English, is that we found evidence of increased organization of the photons (a possible blurred image of a spirit) in the images when the DHCI's were supposedly present. Importantly, there was no evidence of increased organization in the middle trials during the nights when DHCI's were not invited to the laboratory.

We also found that Sophia consistently produced bigger effects than Susy. This difference between Sophia and Susy was originally observed when we would physically run the experiments ourselves, and this difference continued when the experiments were run by the computer which served as a "proxy experimenter" for us.

Think about this. Hypothesized spirits who have been allegedly working in our laboratory for years can apparently follow instructions and be detected even when no physical experimenter is present, and none of us know (at least consciously) exactly when the data are being collected.

V. Taking Stock of the Evidence (Criterion 2)

You may be wondering whether I highlighted examples of experiments

which are especially persuasive. Have I purposely "cherry picked" the kinds of evidence which are most compelling and convincing to me? The answer is yes.

However, my intention has not been to deceive you, or for that matter, to deceive myself. My goal has not been to see the evidence through "rose colored" glasses, in the process creating a biased and false picture of the evidence.

On the contrary, I have been attempting to share with you the kinds of carefully conducted experiments in the areas of mediumship and technology (my areas of expertise) which clearly complement and extend the other three major areas of research – After Death Communication (ADC), Near Death Experience (NDE), and evidence of reincarnation in adults and children. Taken together, these five areas of research very strongly support the hypothesis of life beyond physical death, and therefore Forry's apparent continued mentoring in Paul's life.

For the record, I was aware of all of this evidence before I was introduced to Paul Davids, and through him, to the apparent afterlife phenomena associated with Forry. Moreover, the two mediums I recommended that Paul meet with were mediums whom I had tested previously and who had passed with flying colors. Finally, the technology I spontaneously tested with Forry was technology I had been investigating for a couple of years with multiple DHCI's, including Harry Houdini.

I should briefly share my experience with "Hypothesized Harry Houdini" – HHH for short.

In the 2010 experiments, I employed the silicon photomultiplier system. This technology detects single photons of light in pitch black environments and counts the detected photons in real time. The silicon photomultiplier experiments were not computer automated "proxy experimenter" studies; they were conducted by a physically present experimenter – me.

After the initial experiments involving multiple Departed Hypothesized Co-Investigators, including Susy, Sophia and Harry, produced results which were clearly positive, it became essential to determine if I could replicate these experiments by trying to produce such effects myself (in other words, without the aid of DHCI's). With the DHCI's we observed increased photon counts as compared to appropriate baseline "no spirit" control trials. Each trial was 5 minutes in duration.

I have practiced various meditation techniques over the years, and in the process of my directing an NIH-funded Center for Frontier Medicine in Biofield Sciences (reported in my book *The Energy Healing Experiments*), I was taught seven different energy healing techniques including Healing Touch, Chi Gong

and Reiki. The evidence indicated that I have measurable effects as an energy healer, and I was eager to determine if I could increase the photon counts with my mind similar to what the DHCI's apparently could do. Try as I might, I was unable, by myself, to reproduce the DHCI's effects. These data were reported as one of the conditions in the first experiment published in the journal *EXPLORE* in 2010.

Meanwhile, when I invited HHH to work with the silicon photomultiplier, he turned out to be a "star." In fact, in the third experiment published in the 2010 paper, I invited HHH to create a "yes" photon pattern on some trials and a "no" photon pattern on other trials, compared to appropriate baseline trials. I encouraged HHH to figure out what the yes and no photon patterns would look like.

When I analyzed the data, I discovered not only that (1) the yes and no trials could easily be distinguished from the baseline control trials (in terms of overall increases in photon counts), but (2) the yes and no trials could be distinguished between themselves as well. In brief, the evidence indicated that for the "yes" trials, the increased photon counts occurred early within the 5 minute trials, whereas for the "no" trials, the increased photon counts occurred toward the end of the 5 minute trials. In sum, I was led to the conclusion that HHH was a pretty clever DHCI.

As far as I can tell, HFJA (Hypothesized Forest J Ackerman) is a very attentive, eager and cooperative DHCI too.

22. WHEN CREDIBLE PEOPLE BELIEVE

I. Who Believes in Life Beyond Death?

Now that you have been introduced to (1) theory and logic which points to the possible reality of life after death (Criterion 1), plus (2) scientific research which supports the hypothesis of survival of consciousness after death (Criterion 2), you can understand why I had reasonable as well as evidential reasons to believe in the possibility of life after death and to seriously entertain that it was true.

For some people, this might be sufficient for them to believe. However, I found that for me – and many others, especially skeptics – the combination of Criterion 1 and 2 was not sufficient.

In my case, being a well-trained skeptical thinker and a well-educated disbeliever in the possibility of an afterlife, I had this strong, uncontrollable emotional reactive habit of automatically assuming that anyone who believed in life after death was naïve, ignorant, stupid, brainwashed, prejudiced, delusional and/or crazy. This emotional reaction was clearly inconsistent with the emerging theory (Criterion 1) and research (Criterion 2).

I experienced increasing conflict between what the emerging theory and research were teaching me versus my growing fear that if I accepted the theory and research, that maybe I was becoming "brainwashed" by the theory and evidence, and I was even "losing my mind."

I came to realize that I was like one of Pavlov's classically conditioned dogs who automatically salivated to the sound of a bell. Dogs do not automatically salivate when they hear a bell ringing, and neither do we. Dogs salivate when they see and receive food. We do the same.

However, if the conditions are set up where a bell is sounded and then a few seconds later a dog (or a person) is given a tasty treat, and this it repeated over and over, after a while when the dog (or person) hears the bell, he will automatically anticipate receiving a delicious morsel, and he will begin

salivating in anticipation of receiving the food.

Pavlov termed the food the “unconditioned stimulus” and salivation to the food the “unconditioned response.” He called the bell the “conditioned stimulus” and the learned salivation to the bell the “conditioned response.”

Negative responses can be as readily classically conditioned as positive responses. Dogs and people do not typically respond to the sound of a small ringing bell with fear or pain. However, if dogs or people are exposed to conditions where every time a sweet little bell is sounded, and the tingling of the bell is followed by the occurrence of a deafening sound or an explosion, or the receipt of a painful electric shock from a Taser gun, after a few pairings of the conditioned stimulus (the bell) and the unconditioned stimulus (the explosion or the Taser), dogs and people will respond to a once-innocent bell with a conditioned response of fear or terror.

I came to realize that I had – and still have to some degree – a suite of negative “conditioned responses” which are automatically triggered by the “conditioned stimulus” word “afterlife,” and especially the word “heaven.” The negative conditioned responses (thoughts) triggered by this conditioned stimulus include: “wrong,” “superstitious,” “stupid,” “wishful thinking,” “biased,” “New Age,” “delusional,” and “insane.”

I found that it was not enough for me to know intellectually that Criterion 1 (Logic and Theory) and Criterion 2 (Scientific Evidence) were strongly met, to effectively counteract my history of classically conditioned negative responses to the concept of life beyond death.

Knowledge of theory and evidence was not enough to extinguish my classically conditioned reactions.

However, I discovered that with the addition of a 3rd Criterion – the existence of credible and trustworthy people who also believed in life beyond death – that this evidence helped to tip the balance away from my aversive classically-conditioned history and toward a more accurate and justified belief that was consistent with Criteria 1 and 2. Knowing these people first hand helped me change my mind.

II. The Seven S’s Criteria

Over the years I have been fortunate to know people who (1) meet what I call the “Seven S’s” criteria for being credible and trustworthy people, and also (2) strongly believe in life beyond physical death. For example, I describe these

people in my chapter on FACT in *The Beacon of Mind* book.

As we review these criteria here, I encourage you to think about people whom you might know, or know of, who fulfill all seven of the S's – whether or not they happen to believe in life beyond death.

The Seven S's describe people who are:

1. Successful
2. Smart
3. Skeptical
4. Sophisticated
5. Savvy
6. Straight (as in honest and trustworthy), and
7. Sane.

Though we could debate the precise definitions of each of these seven S's, the fact is that it is possible for us to find special individuals who clearly meet each and all of these seven S's. They:

1. are highly successful in their chosen professions (for example, they are CEO's and executives in major companies, senior professors at major universities, directors of distinguished institutions and centers, winners of esteemed prizes and awards, etc.),

AND

2. are very smart (for example, they often have high IQ scores, have received high grades in college and graduate schools, are established problem solvers, etc.),

AND

3. are demonstrably and genuinely skeptical as in question-ing, thoughtfully challenging of information and ideas, cautious about drawing conclusions, *etc.*

AND

4. show strong evidence of being sophisticated by engaging in complex thinking, are careful to consider multiple points of view and alternative sources of information and interpretation, are able to analyze and integrate divergent and even conflicting information and interpretations, etc.,

AND

5. have a history of being savvy by being experienced, knowledgeable, balanced, mature, clever, not easily fooled, *etc.*

AND

6. are straight as in being trustworthy, honest, ethical, are focused on accuracy/truthfulness, are humble and aware of limitations or absence of important information or knowledge in a given circumstance, etc.,

AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY

7. are evaluated by their peers (as well as health care professionals) as being sane (e.g., they do not show any evidence of neurosis, psychosis, hallucinations, psychopathology, personality disorder, cognitive impairments of information processing and memory, etc.).

Now, when these types of "Seven S's" people hold a belief in something, isn't it wise (i.e., rational and responsible) for us to give these people the "benefit of the doubt" regarding the probable validity of their belief?

Note that I am not proposing that we accept their specific beliefs blindly and without thought, but that we (1) give their beliefs serious consideration, and (2) not let our classically-conditioned "emotional doubts" get in the way of our reaching a responsible and justified conclusion.

III. Seven S's People Who Believe in Life Beyond Death

I do not feel comfortable in personally identifying specific persons I have in mind whom I have come to know, who meet all seven criteria and who also strongly believe in an afterlife. Forry, while in the flesh, did not believe in an

afterlife as we well know by now, and strictly speaking, he probably wouldn't fit all seven of these criteria. I say this with a smile on my face, but he probably wouldn't be universally considered sane in the strictly classical sense. That is not necessarily a negative thing. Many of our greatest artistically-inclined personalities would have given pretty bizarre answers to a standard Rorschach inkblot test in a psychologist's office. If you forgive my tongue-in-cheek, I can just imagine that where a mother of four might see a flower in an inkblot, Forry might well describe seeing Godzilla stomping on the Pentagon.

When I think of Forry, the images that come to my mind include monsters, scary movies, bad science fiction movies (the early science fiction movies, like Ed Wood's *Plan 9 From Outer Space*, were often grade "D" movies or worse), a mansion stuffed to the gills with scary stuff, weird people who work in the Sci-Fi industry, *etc.* These images are at the fringes of conventionality. Of course, when I think of Forry, I also have a positive list of associations that come to mind, especially as a result of coming to know Forry through Paul's eyes as well as through events which I have witnessed (discussed in the next chapter). These laudatory images include creative, smart, devoted, loving, inspiring, playful, humorous, and clever.

Steven Spielberg and Forrest J Ackerman together. Spielberg signed his poster of Close Encounters of the Third Kind *to Forry: "A generation of fantasy-lovers thanks you for raising us so well."*

Nevertheless, even though luminaries such as Steven Spielberg might feel great honor in being in Forry's presence, I can imagine certain CEO's of billion dollar corporations might feel guilt by association.

I know someone (a real person) who is the CEO of a major and highly visible corporation. The corporation has multiple locations, employs over a thousand persons and is worth billions of dollars. Let's say his name is Mr. Roger Busman (this is not his real name) and he is the CEO of State Farm Insurance (he is not the CEO of this corporation).

The truth is that this "Mr. Busman" meets all seven criteria, in spades (and I mean spades – the real person is one of the most amazing and successful people I have ever known or have known of). I have known him personally for more than two decades, and he is a strong supporter of research and education about life after death.

However, if you were Mr. Busman, would you want your name or your corporation associated with Mr. Forrest J Ackerman or fringe interests such as creepy horror movies or Godzilla stomping on the Pentagon, or even puns about cross-eyed teachers who can't control their pupils? The answer should be obvious.

With this appreciation in mind, let me illustrate some of the kinds of people whom I know personally who fit the Seven-S people categorization and are well aware of my research (and the research of others) and who strongly believe in life after death. They include:

1. A CEO of a major corporation (mentioned above)
2. A former publisher and editor in chief of an award winning newspaper
3. A former chairman of the department of surgery at a major university
4. A former chairman of the department of material sciences at a major university
5. A major award winning composer of motion picture music scores and television music.
6. A former high ranking staff member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
7. The director of a major foundation, educated at Harvard University, and
8. A distinguished anthropologist who was the director of an internationally known research institute.

These people are not intellectual lightweights. They are not uncritical, naïve, uneducated, irresponsible or dysfunctional, and they don't operate out at the outer fringes of culture or indulge in what might be considered weird obsessions. These people are leaders in their areas of expertise (and their expertise does not include Dracula and his bevy of undead female vampires or arcane horror literature). They are people who would most likely be admired

universally without qualification – people whom Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and Ph.D.'s and M.D.'s would look up to and want to emulate in every way. Their opinions are founded on mainstream thought and what most would agree is logic and rationality. And as I said, their interests do not veer toward what the mainstream Establishment would consider offbeat topics of highly specialized, personal passions.

When I sometimes begin to wonder (again) whether I am "deceiving myself by the theory and evidence" and even "losing my mind by believing that this is real," I remind myself to think about the Seven S's people. They give us all a certain foothold on conventional reality in our moments of wavering and doubt.

Since the likelihood is that you do not know the eight Seven-S people I am going to discuss, you will have to decide whether I am trustworthy enough for you to believe that these people each meet all Seven S's. And even if you do believe me, the reality is that there is no substitute for having direct experience.

It is one thing for us to know that a "Mr. Busman" really exists. It is another thing to know him first hand and have spent hundreds of hours in his "presence" (he sometimes prefers the word "countenance"). The fact is that I do not know him only by his bio and his accomplishments, I know him first-hand. This difference is essential and invaluable.

A reviewer of this chapter commented: "So the fact that the typical reader of this book, just a regular person working in a factory, believes in an afterlife, must be irrelevant to you. They're not reputable." It is certainly not my intention to imply that "regular" people are not "reputable." Moreover, "regular" people often report having remarkable after death communication experiences which deserve our serious consideration. However, because I am a conservative scientist and am highly skeptical, I set the bar very high for myself before I personally believe that something may be true. When Seven S's people believe something, my rational mind encourages me to consider the potential veracity of their opinions seriously.

Now that you are familiar with Criteria 1-3, we can move on to Criterion 4, direct personal experience with the phenomenon in question.

It is one thing to read about mediums getting accurate information, or to watch them do this on television. It is quite another to witness them first hand, especially under rigidly controlled laboratory conditions.

It is one thing to read about alleged spirits influencing electronic devices, or to read about HHH (Hypothesized Harry Houdini) or HFJA (Hypothesized Forrest J Ackerman) seemingly altering what is being displayed on a computer screen. It is quite another to witness this first hand, again under rigidly

controlled conditions.

And it is one thing to read about HFJA potentially influencing the ink on a printed page, or to watch a documentary presenting the evidence and the analyses. It is quite another to witness personally first-hand physical anomalies which go against everything you have been taught in mainstream science.

It is now Alice in Wonderland time. For many people, it is having these direct personal experiences which leads us to change our minds.

Forry Ackerman as a spaceman, not one of your mainstream, conventional Seven-S people (and he was proud of that).

23. HAVING DIRECT PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

I have never orbited the moon or for that matter been in space. I have never performed heart transplant surgery or even sutured a superficial wound. I have never given birth to triplets or for that matter been pregnant. And I have never built a Lamborghini or for that matter driven one.

However, this does not prevent me from rationally believing that astronauts have orbited the moon or that women have been astronauts in space. This does not prevent me from justifiably believing in the reality of heart transplant surgery or minor emergency care. This does not prevent me from responsibly believing in the reality of triplets or pregnancy. And this does not prevent me from accurately believing in the existence of a Lamborghini factory or that these extraordinary cars can be safely driven.

Simply stated, having direct personal experience (Criterion 4) is often not necessary for holding accurate beliefs and reaching valid conclusions. The combination of Criteria 1-3 is often sufficient for us to derive justified and credible beliefs.

However, if a phenomenon is novel, challenging, and/or controversial, and especially if it is "seemingly unbelievable," then having a direct personal experience with the phenomenon is often essential. And for certain phenomena, there is no substitute for experiencing it ourselves.

This is especially the case for having personal emotional experiences. I could cite extensive biological and psychological theory which predicts and explains the existence of love in humans and other animals (Criterion 1). I could review the substantial scientific evidence which supports the existence of love (Criterion 2). And I could share with you a myriad of "7 S's" people I know who believe that love is real and vital for life. However, until you have fallen in love with someone, or experienced the profound love for a child or a pet, you do not know what love is.

I have been blessed – though sometimes it feels like I have been cursed – to have had extensive direct personal experience with phenomena associated with

life after death, and this includes phenomena associated with Forry.

I have reported many direct personal experiences with mediums, including readings involving my deceased parents and other special people I have known such as Susy Smith, in *The Afterlife Experiments, The Truth about Medium*, and *The Sacred Promise*. I have had hundreds of hours of direct personal experiences with research mediums under conditions which appear to rule out all conventional explanations of the evidence, including fraud and cold reading tricks (you will recall that I have formal training in how to be a fake medium). Moreover, I have experienced hundreds of hours of secret readings involving various Departed Hypothesized Co-Investigators (DHCI's) where specific pieces of information were received which were later verified to be true.

In addition to working with research mediums, I have spent hundreds of hours employing various kinds of technology with specific DHCI's, and I have observed replicated effects on the signals being recorded.

It is important that you appreciate my extensive level of direct personal experience in the areas of mediumship and technology before I share with you some of my direct personal experiences involving Forry. To give you a flavor for the types of experiences I have had, I will reveal two amazing mediumship experiences involving the late Susy Smith and her warnings (as relayed by the mediums) about impending car problems.

I will follow this by revealing two amazing experiments I did with HHH concerning his ability to hit "home runs" using a silicon photomultiplier system.

And I will then share two examples of personal "kinesthetic intuitive moments" where I briefly experienced what it was like to function as a medium. I have already discussed some of the Instrumental Trans-Communication experiences with Forry in the laboratory. However, the following material will set the stage for me sharing three extraordinary anomalous physical experiences I have directly witnessed with Forry – things that occurred outside the lab.

Each example may seem unbelievable to you. The truth is that they seem unbelievable to me, and I experienced them first hand!

What I have discovered is that the more such unbelievable events are replicated, the greater the level of disbelief one may experience. Often the so-called boggle factor does not decrease with replication, it actually increases.

This increased disbelief is not rational; it is emotional. Replication and validation are cornerstones of the scientific method. On the one hand, with each replication we are more convinced that the phenomenon is real, and yet simultaneously the phenomenon feels more unbelievable and seemingly impossible.

If any single "formally physical person" illustrates this emotional boggle factor, it is Forry. As the empirical evidence accumulated, the case for Forry being alive and well became stronger and stronger, and yet simultaneously the evidence became more and more difficult to believe.

I. Susy Warns Me about Car Problems, Twice

I discussed in detail in *The Sacred Promise* that I conducted some private "self-science" experiments with various mediums after Susy Smith passed. One medium whom I call Joan in the book, I had met via email, and I had only conversed with her a few times on the telephone before the amazing event I am about to confess occurred.

In brief, Joan had claimed that an unknown deceased woman named Susy had somehow managed to find her way to Joan and that Susy had messages for me. These messages included evidence that Susy was "watching over me" – for example, seeing what I was doing in real time – and that she also had warnings for me about the future. I will call Susy "Hypothesized Susy Smith" or HSS for short. Apparently, HSS had selected Joan to work with and had dropped in on her. At this point Joan was a closet medium. Although Joan claimed to have seen spirits since she was a child, Joan was not a professional medium when I first met her.

I designed a private experiment where I requested that Joan ask HSS two questions every weekday morning, and then email HSS's responses to me. The first question was "What did HSS see having happened in my life during the previous 24 hours?" I picked 24 hours because I can pretty accurately recall what happened to me yesterday (but not much before that).

The second question was "What does HSS see happening to me over the next 24 hours?" Joan would email me what she received from SS in the morning, and later that day I would score the emailed reading using my laboratory's standardized scoring system.

The readings were performed on the weekdays. We did the experiment five days a week for about ten weeks.

For the first question, Joan's average accuracy over the course of the ten weeks was above 85%. Some of the evidence was "off the charts," and I shared a portion of this extraordinary evidence in *The Sacred Promise*.

Interestingly, for the second question, Joan provided relatively little information. However, the few pieces of information she did provide proved to be surprisingly accurate. One piece of information involved my then newly

purchased preowned car. In brief, here's what happened.

On a Tuesday morning, Joan wrote that HSS was saying that I should check the tires on my car. HSS allegedly said that one of them was going to go flat. I thought to myself "that's ridiculous."

First, my car was a mint condition eight year old, white Jaguar XJ8 with less than 40,000 miles. I had just purchased this preowned vehicle two weeks earlier in the Los Angeles area. The tires had substantial tread.

Second, what did Susy know about cars? She had been in a wheelchair for almost thirty years before she died. Automotive mechanics were not an area in which she had expertise. So as you can probably guess, I ignored the tire warning, and I drove to my laboratory at the University of Arizona.

Around 6 pm that night when I left my laboratory, as I walked to the parking lot and approached my car, I saw that the left rear tire of my car was flat! I could not believe my eyes. I wondered, had Joan pulled a fast one and called someone to let the air out of the tire? Had I possibly experienced a blackout spell and unconsciously emptied the air from the tire myself?

I called AAA to have the tire checked. The serviceman examined the tire and explained that it had split, probably due to the heat. It was close to 100 degrees that day. He then checked the other tires and discovered that they had "dry rot." I had never heard that term before in reference to a tire, and the Jaguar dealership in LA had failed to point this out to me. The gentleman from AAA said that if this were his car he would not only replace the rear tire, he would replace the other tires as well. As you can probably guess, I took this as a sign. I decided to purchase four new tires, and I thanked Joan and HSS.

This incident could have been a fluke, just a coincidence, correct? The only way I could determine whether this event was more than a chance coincidence was to see if HSS were ever to warn me spontaneously about a future car problem and if I could determine that she were correct again.

I did not have any other car problems during the ten weeks of the experiment with Joan. And Joan did not offer further warnings from HSS. Following this five-day-a-week experiment, I only conducted sporadic, individual session experiments with Joan and HSS, and I did not think further about the tire warning.

Then, a few years later HSS apparently dropped in on another new, unsuspecting medium named Suzanne Giesemann. Suzanne is truly extraordinary. She was a decorated former commander in the Navy. Moreover, she had served as an Aide to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during 9/11. After many sessions testing Suzanne with HSS, I came to the conclusion

that Suzanne was the real deal.

Every now and again Suzanne would spontaneously email me messages from HSS. One Thursday morning Suzanne emailed me and said, out the blue, that (1) HSS had come to her talking about an old car, and that (2) we would have difficulty starting it. We did have an older car then. Rhonda had a 1992 mint condition quasar blue C4 Corvette Coupe, which we typically took out on weekends. We had had the car for seven years, and it regularly started.

I immediately wondered if Suzanne and HSS were correct. I raced out to the garage, put the key in the ignition, and tested to see if the car started. The car started, perfectly. I emailed Suzanne back and explained that contrary to HSS's prediction, the "old" car started just fine. It appeared that either HSS and/or Suzanne was wrong.

Then, two days later on a Saturday morning, Rhonda and I decided to do some errands in her Corvette. To my surprise, when I started the car some black smoke came out of the tail pipes. I had never seen this before in Rhonda's car, and neither had she. However, the car seemed to run okay, so we began our errands.

To our surprise, after the third errand, we noticed the car was running a bit erratically. We were near the Chevy dealership at the time but decided to complete our errands. After the fourth errand, I literally could not start the car. Since this was Rhonda's car, she took over the driving and was able to get the motor to turn over. However, a few blocks later the car sputtered and died. With the remaining momentum Rhonda was able to steer her now dead car into a parking lot.

Her car would not start, period. We had to call AAA, and the tow truck arrived about a half hour later. The AAA serviceman could not start it either, and he had to tow the car to the Chevy dealership.

While we were waiting for the tow truck, Rhonda and I pondered Suzanne's email two days earlier with HSS's warning. Later that day, I sheepishly emailed Suzanne and said that maybe HSS had been right after all!

It is worth noting that I had never been in a car which died like this, and I have been driving for over fifty years. Rhonda apparently did experience something like this in 1984 in an old Astro, but not since then.

As mentioned previously, Susy was fond of saying that some things were "too coincidental to be accidental." One validated warning of a car problem might be accidental; a second validated warning seems "too coincidental to be accidental."

Altogether, from the time Susy "died" in 2001 and became "HSS," I have

received a total of six warnings from HSS, two from a single medium (Joan), the rest from four other mediums. All six turned out to be verified.

Hard to believe, yet true.

II. Harry Becomes the "Home Run" King

My experience with spirit communication technology has been equally memorable. In *The Sacred Promise* I shared some of my earliest experiences with HHH. I will briefly review some of this history, and I will then share some of my more recent experiences with HHH.

It was a Wednesday afternoon in 2010, and I was having a private meeting with Jerry Cohen, CEO of Canyon Ranch, about the current progress of our spirit communication technology research. I left the silicon photomultiplier system at home with the TV monitor running and informed "them," our friendly spirit collaborators, that this was a "free play period" when they could practice using the system in any way they wanted. These "play time" periods were made available at various times (morning, noon, and night). Alhough in those days I videotaped the TV monitor using time-lapse recording equipment, nevertheless I did not analyze the data since the data was completely uncontrolled.

At this meeting, I had prepared a short "show and tell" video plus a PowerPoint presentation for Jerry about the possible use of the photomultiplier system for spirit communication technology, and I briefly mentioned the possibility that Harry Houdini was using the equipment. It turned out that Jerry was a Houdini fan, and he asked the following question, which I paraphrase: "If Harry is that good, can he hit a home run? Can he make larger spikes than just 25 or 30 unit bursts?" (In those days, I simply counted the number of photon bursts which were greater than 25 units.)

I told Jerry that every now and again, a larger spike would be observed—50, or even 75 units large. But I had never asked "them" to try to make larger ones, or smaller ones, for that matter.

As I drove home, I recalled the movie *Field of Dreams*. I remembered the comment that a secret sitter once made about the gifted medium Mary Occhino. He said, and I paraphrase, "Mary not only hit the ball out of the park. She hit it out of New York City."

I wondered, could Harry hit a "home run" when requested, and could he hit it out of the park, if not the city of Tucson? I happened to have a meeting at my home scheduled with a postdoctoral fellow, Dr. Jolie Haun, and I was ten minutes late. I raced in, and I quickly looked at the TV monitor in my study. To

my amazement, the sporadic photon bursts on the screen were tiny, less than one/fifth their normal size. I had never seen such tiny bursts before.

Normally the computer program displayed 25-unit high bursts in such a way that they reached the full height of the vertical Y-axis. Only if a 50 or 75 units spike occurred would the Y axis be adjusted, reducing the size of the 25 unit spikes accordingly. Why did the spikes now look so tiny? Had the software automatically adjusted the Y-axis scale because an anomalously large burst had appeared?

When I looked at the Y-axis, I noticed that the scale was not displaying 0 to 25; it was not displaying 0 to 50, or even 0 to 75. It was now displaying 0 to 175! In other words, the new 0 – 175-range implied that at least one photon burst had occurred that was possibly as large as 175 photons.

It is important to understand that under the conditions of this research, most of the bursts in the pitch-black chamber were just 25 units or less. A burst of 175 photons would be almost next to 700% greater than a typical burst of 25 photons.

I thought to myself “Wow … I need to check this out.” Since Dr. Haun was not aware I was conducting this research, and since our meeting was not about life after death or spirits, I simply noted the time. Later I would review the digital time-lapse photography and see when the super-large photon burst occurred—presuming it was a burst.

After our meeting, I replayed the time-lapse video and discovered that a 173-unit burst had actually occurred just around the time that I was driving into my garage. I wondered, could this be an intentional response by HHH?

If something happens once, it could be a chance event, an artifact or accident, something unimportant. But if this phenomenon was real and was somehow attached to HHH, he should theoretically be able to duplicate it.

I decided to restart the Free Play period, and carefully watched what was unfolding. The time-lapse camera was taking snapshots of the screens. As I was watching the screen, in my mind I specifically asked HHH if he could make a large spike.

What happened next I witnessed with my own two eyes. I actually saw a burst occur that was 173-units, and it occurred shortly after I had asked HHH if he could make a big one!

In watching hundreds of hours of outputs, I rarely saw bursts above 50 – 75 units. I was now seeing a 173-unit burst. Was this just another accident? Or could it be something more? I did not know. Unfortunately, I had to give a lecture at Canyon Ranch that evening, so I left the system running in “Play

Time.” When I returned around 10:00 p.m., I noticed that the Y-axis was back to normal: 25 units. I was really tired, but I wanted to watch a little more.

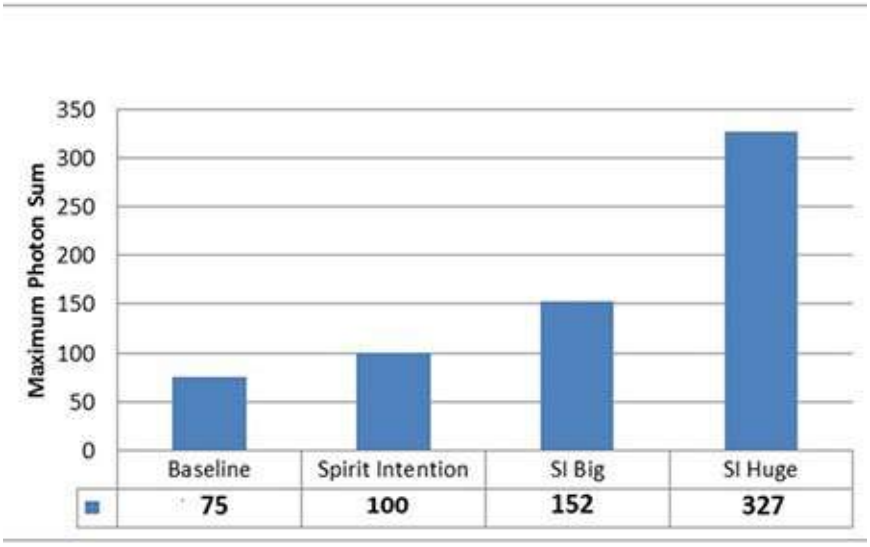
Around 10:15, I decided to ask HHH if he could make another “big one.” This time I invited Rhonda to be present. To my and Rhonda’s utter amazement, another huge 173-unit burst appeared on the screen.

One big spike occurring after Jerry had spontaneously asked about HHH possibly producing home runs out of the park, and me wondering about DHCI’s playing baseball and a medium metaphorically hitting the ball out of New York City – yes, this could have been “accidental.”

A second big spike, occurring within a minute of me asking in my head whether HHH, if he was here, could hit another home run—and we can begin to wonder if this was “too coincidental to be accidental.”

However, a third big spike, again occurring within a minute of me asking in my head, in Ronda’s presence, whether Hypothesized Harry Houdini could hit the ball out of the park. Did it make sense to label this simply a third accident, or was this “the third time is the charm?” In fact, I began to wonder if HHH had metaphorically hit the ball out of the city of Tucson.

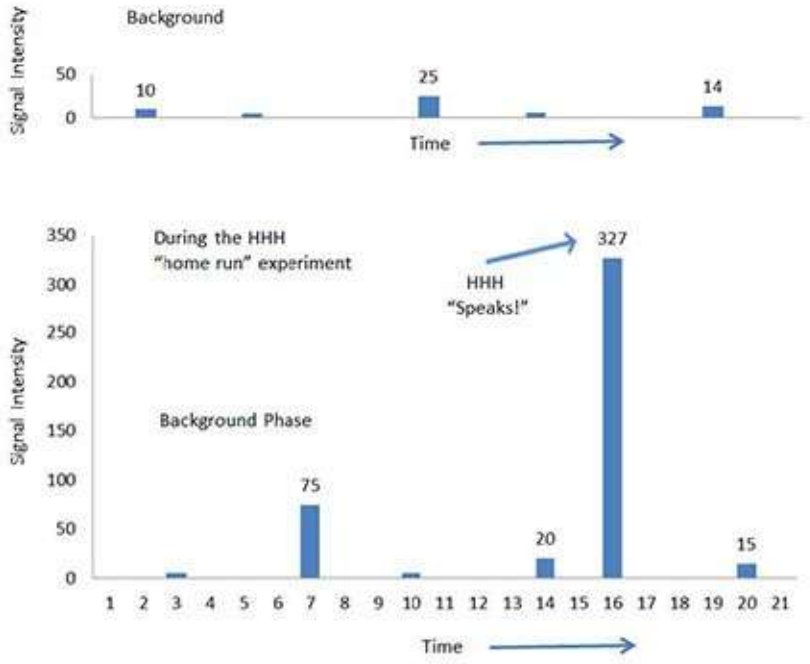
As you can probably guess, it was only a matter of time before I would attempt to see if HHH could learn to make spikes of different amplitudes under more controlled experimental conditions. The graph below displays the findings of an experiment where I asked HHH (1) simply to increase the number of photon bursts without trying to make a large one (called “Spirit Intention” or “SI”), (2) to actively try to make a “Big” one, and (3) to attempt to make a “Huge” one, as compared to a resting baseline trial. To my surprise and delight, HHH appears to have been successful.



Departed Hypothesized Co-Investigator Harry Houdini's response to Dr. Gary Schwartz' request for a huge photon burst amplitude spike.

You can see that the largest amplitude spike during the baseline condition was 75 units. During the Spirit Intention trial, the largest amplitude spike increased slightly to 100. However, when I asked HHH to try to make a "Big" one, the largest amplitude during the trial reach 152. And when I asked him to attempt to make a "Huge" one, one of the spikes reached 327 units!

Summarizing "the data": You've just read a description of experiments that contain a lot of numbers. To be certain you understand, let's summarize. Information from the highly sensitive light detector must be digitized so it can be recorded and processed by a computer (which can only process digital information). Consider the simulated data in the figure.



This figure compares the signal from HHH to the background phase.

If there is no experiment underway, from the sensitive light detector in a pitch black environment, there are still are small, occasional, bursts that occur – essentially the "noise" of the experiment (top trace). We call data collected when no experiment is being performed the "background" signal. In the top trace, 5 bursts occurred with values of 10, 5, 25, 6 and 14 units. The data system only reports bursts with values greater than 10 units, so it would only report a 10 unit burst, followed some time later by a 25 unit burst, followed later yet by a 14 unit burst. As I said, ones smaller than 10 are not reported.

The second trace in the figure is a simulation of data from the day when HHH was asked to hit a home run. When there was no conversation taking place, there was (and always is) background – again, e.g., 5, 75, 5 unit bursts that randomly occur. On that day, the highest background burst was 75 units. When HHH was asked to generate a really big signal, a 327 unit burst was detected!

It is one thing to read about such occurrences and view the graphs of the data; it is another thing to experience them as they occur. Moreover, I have tried to produce such changes with my own mind, and the truth be known, using the metaphor of baseball, Harry can hit the ball out of the city, and I rarely make it to first base!

Since I am not a medium, and I do not see or hear spirit under most circumstances, I still find it extraordinarily challenging to accept the obvious

conclusion – that HHH is not only here, but he is doing his darn best to earn Jerry's title of the photomultiplier home run king. You may be experiencing a similar challenge in accepting these data. However, the evidence is the evidence. And for the record, at the time I wrote these words, the evidence clearly indicated that HHH remains at the top of his game.

III. My Kinesthetic Intuitive Moments

As stated previously, I am not a medium, and never claim to be one. I have minimal (at best) visual or auditory imagery (even my dreams are mostly bland). I almost never experience seeing or hearing an unseen spirit. Even if I did have such a fleeting experience, I would likely attribute the experience to my meager imagination or erroneous perception.

When Susy was alive, she often reminded me of the risks involved in conducting mediumship research. She said "Gary, you have to be careful when you work with mediums. Mediumship is catching; it can rub off on you."

Since Susy was an authority on mediumship research and the broader area of life after death, I was inclined to give her the benefit of the doubt. Over the years, I occasionally have had what I would call "kinesthetic intuitive moments," when I experienced strong feelings associated with a deceased person whom I did not know, which proved to be accurate, as verified by genuine mediums and/or family members of the deceased. I will share two exemplary kinesthetic intuitive moments here.

I do have a well-developed kinesthetic sense, partially honed through my years of playing musical instruments (e.g., as I mentioned, I played professional guitar for ten years), and partly due to my university research and training in energy healing as described in my book *The Energy Healing Experiments*. It turns out that every now and again I have had spontaneous kinesthetic feelings associated with specific deceased persons. When these kinesthetic intuitive moments have occurred, they have been surprisingly accurate (e.g., above 90%).

I have experienced a number of kinesthetic intuitive moments associated with Marcia Eklund, Rhonda's deceased mother, who died five years before I met Rhonda, and also associated with Rhonda's father, Roger Eklund, who died a few years before Marcia did.

My favorite kinesthetic intuitive moment associated with Marcia happened one day in our living room. Rhonda was talking about her mother whom she often senses in spirit (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic). Rhonda had reported her extensive experiences connecting with her mother in her book *Love Eternal*,

New Edition, including validations she and I obtained with multiple research mediums under blinded conditions.

Returning to our living room, to my surprise I had this spontaneous sense of Rhonda's mother making a rhubarb pie from scratch. For the record, I did not know whether Marcia baked rhubarb pies. To my amazement, rhubarb was one of Marcia's favorite specialty pies. Was this simply a lucky guess? Was I somehow reading Rhonda's mind? Or, was this coming from Marcia? By itself, I had no way of determining which of these hypotheses was correct.

However, what was really odd was that I felt my hands "weaving" ribbons of dough under and over each other as if I was making a pie crust. This was especially odd for me. I had never experienced my hands feeling this before. I have never baked a pie (or baked any desert for that matter). In fact, except for boiling water and using a microwave, I know virtually nothing about cooking. I have no skills in this arena. I was embarrassed to share these strange weaving feelings with Rhonda, but I figured what the heck, and I demonstrated with my hands what I was feeling.

To my great surprise, those feelings were accurate. This is specifically what Marcia did when she baked rhubarb pies. Was this simply my body playing out an unconscious memory or association with rhubarb pies? (I do not like rhubarb pies and I may have eaten three slices in my entire life.) Was I somehow reading Rhonda's mind and feeling her memory in my fingers? Or was this a communication coming from Marcia?

The truth is that someone who is having a potential mediumship experience cannot determine, for certain, if the source of the information is actually coming from spirit – and this includes professional mediums. My personal experience was that (1) it "felt" as if it was coming from some unseen source, (2) the information was unexpectedly accurate, and (3) the process fit the description of what skilled mediums often report when they have kinesthetic experiences associated with spirit.

My favorite kinesthetic intuitive moment associated with Roger, Rhonda's father, actually happened while I was driving with Rhonda. It was a Saturday afternoon. We were returning home from an errand and we happened to be speaking about her deceased father. I was steering with my left hand and holding Rhonda's hand with my right hand. I was preparing to make a left turn, and for the sake of safety let go of Rhonda's hand to make the turn.

As I let go with my right hand, I had this experience in my left hand of holding on to an invisible "knob" on my steering wheel, and that if I had such a knob, I could have continued to hold Rhonda's hand. I also "sensed" that this

was somehow associated with Rhonda's father. Needless to say, I had never had such an experience before.

After I made the turn, I sheepishly asked Rhonda if her father ever had a car with a knob on the steering wheel. I explained that I had never driven a car with such a knob. To my amazement, Rhonda explained that for many years her father had been a bus driver, and the large steering wheel on the bus had such a knob. In fact, according to Rhonda, Roger often steered with one hand (resting the other) when he made big turns.

Was the impression of my spontaneous kinesthetic feeling of the knob associated with Roger a lucky guess? Was I somehow unconsciously tapping into Rhonda's memory bank of her father's driving style? Or was I, at that moment, connecting with Roger, and was he giving me this timely and relevant information?

When we reached home, I looked up steering wheel knobs and discovered that they are called "spinner" knobs. I also learned that they are sometimes called "suicide" knobs, and there are many varieties.

The next day we decided to take the morning off and have breakfast in Tombstone, a tourist town in Arizona. It was fairly crowded, and it took us a while to find a parking place. To our utter amazement, a few vehicles away from our car was parked an open topped dune buggy-style vehicle, and mounted prominently on the steering wheel was a spinner/suicide knob!

Was this just a coincidence? Or was it something more, maybe a propitious synchronicity? I should mention that we have visited Tombstone at least a dozen times since that moment, and I have never seen another steering wheel knob on any car, dune buggy-style or other.

I share these examples not because they are proof that such spontaneous kinesthetic intuitive moments are associated with spirit. I share them because they relate to what we are calling Criterion 4 – having direct personal experiences. When you add the Criterion 4 examples described in this chapter to Criteria 1, 2, and 3 reported in the previous three chapters, the additive combination of Criteria 1 through 4 is compelling and worth taking seriously.

IV. Experiences Associated with Forry

Earlier in this book Paul has discussed the two mediumship readings we witnessed together. He has also mentioned some of the effects HFJA (hypothesized Forrest J Ackerman) appears to have had with the equipment. At this point there is no need to recount my personal experiences of surprise,

wonder, amazement, and disbelief as these events unfolded.

I will now share with you a few of the anomalous physical events which I personally experienced associated with HFJA which were so improbable and unbelievable that I still shake my head as I review them here. They not only illustrate extraordinary physical phenomena, but they illustrate extraordinary synchronicities as well. These three uncanny examples cross my "boggle threshold," and in light of all the evidence I have witnessed, my boggle threshold is now pretty high. Paul briefly mentioned them earlier in the book. I will provide more detail.

However, before revealing these mind boggling events, I should clarify my potential reservations about Forry. Unlike Paul, who knew Forry really well and came to love and respect him deeply, I had never heard of Forry prior to meeting Paul, and I could only infer how odd Forry must have been in life. As Paul explained to me, Forry had an "obsession with grade-B science fiction." Paul said that "in spite of his [Forry's] obvious love of the bizarre and dark side in a literary sense (as Edgar Allan Poe loved it), he dealt with these passions responsibly, honoring the creators who worked in these fields from special movie makeup artists to prop builders to animators."

I gather from Paul that there were quirks of Forry's unusual personality that led Forry to accentuate such off-beat science fiction and horror (Poe-like) interests. Given that Forry was a very odd and playful person in life, is it surprising that the evidence of Forry's continued life after he died is equally odd, if not more odd and more playful, now that he is in the afterlife?

I would not be surprised if Forry has come to understand and appreciate that I genuinely enjoy his eccentric and playful nature, and I deeply respect his devotion and caring for the people and causes he loves.

The first of the anomalous physical events involves a set of incidents which transpired on two back-to-back weekend trips to Sedona in the fall of 2011. Both trips were unplanned, at least in Rhonda's and my consciousness. The first trip was a spontaneous "let's take the weekend off and go to Sedona" trip. Since I regularly give a scheduled workshop on energy healing at Canyon Ranch in Tucson on Friday afternoons, we left for Sedona on a Saturday morning, and we returned to Tucson that Sunday night.

When we arrived in Sedona we discovered that the Woody Allen movie *Midnight in Paris* was playing, and we had wanted to see that movie. We knew that the movie involved fictional scenes involving famous historical painters like Salvador Dali and Pablo Picasso. When we got to the theater around 6:30 pm, we noticed that the poster for the movie featured the famous painting "Starry

Night" by Vincent van Gogh. This painting holds a special place in our hearts. I took multiple photographs with my iPhone of the movie poster, because of this personal history with "Starry Night." In fact, I took more pictures of this one poster than of any single movie poster I have ever seen (and I rarely take photos of movie posters).

Based on the poster, we presumed that van Gogh would be in the movie as well. To our surprise and disappointment, van Gogh was not a character in the movie. We thought this strange. Why did the advertising team decide to feature a famous work of art by a painter who was not in the script?

All of this would become meaningful, and baffling, the following weekend.

After we returned to Tucson, I discovered an email from Paul asking me if Rhonda and I were coming to Sedona to a preview screening of *The Life After Death Project*. Apparently Paul had emailed Rhonda and me the invitation earlier, but both of us had missed this email. In fact, the movie theater was holding a Paul Davids Film Festival that weekend featuring many of Paul's documentaries and dramatic movies. We were eager to see the fruits of Paul's labor. We were thrilled to spend some time with Paul and his wonderful wife, Hollace. And the truth be known, we rarely turn down any excuse to visit Sedona. Hence, the following Saturday we drove up to Sedona in time for the late afternoon screening of Paul's documentary. For the record, this is the first and only time that Rhonda and I went to Sedona two weekends in a row.

When we got to the theater showing the Paul Davids Film Festival, Rhonda and I noticed two movie posters side by side. On the right was a movie poster for *The Life After Death Project*. However, it was the movie poster on the left which took our breath away. It was a poster of a movie Paul produced and directed called *Starry Night*, about van Gogh coming back in our era to finish some of his works and set right the affairs of his tragic life. The poster featured van Gogh's masterpiece painting "Starry Night."

We could not believe our eyes. Two movies in two weeks, both fictional stories involving famous painters, and both movie posters featured the van Gogh painting "Starry Night." What are the odds?

Because we were a bit early, and because there was a Native American store in the same mall as the theater, we decided to visit the store before going into the theatre. As fate would have it, Rhonda was looking at a hat rack containing hats, and one of the hats was yellow.

Why is this important? The reason is that the van Gogh character in Paul's *Starry Night* poster was wearing a similar shaped yellow hat! We knew that the odds of finding a yellow hat which was a reasonably close match to the van

Gogh hat were ridiculously tiny. In honor of the apparent synchronicity, I purchased the hat for Rhonda.

When we entered the theater, we discovered that Paul had saved us front row seats. Paul introduced the film, and it began. To our surprise we discovered that Paul's production company was named Yellow Hat Productions. We might have noticed this earlier, since we had previously watched two of his DVD's, *Jesus in India* and *The Sci-Fi Boys*. However, neither of us remembered the name of Paul's production company, but we found ourselves noticing it in the theater since Rhonda had just received her very own yellow hat.

This was the first time Rhonda and I were seeing *The Life After Death Project*. It was billed as a work in progress, yet to be finalized. We were learning things in the documentary that we did not know previously. The totality of the evidence Paul was integrating, especially the physical phenomena, was nothing short of extraordinary.

After the screening, I could not resist sharing with Paul the crazy connection between the Woody Allen *Midnight in Paris* "Starry Night" poster photographed last weekend and his "Starry Night" poster. I took out my iPhone and went to my photos. To my utter amazement, all of the pictures I had taken the week before of the Woody Allen poster had disappeared!

Rhonda and I were speechless. The pictures I had taken prior to entering the theater to see *Midnight in Paris* were still there, and the pictures I had taken after seeing the movie were still there. The only pictures that were missing were the specific images of the *Midnight in Paris* poster featuring van Gogh's "Starry Night."

Nothing like this had ever happened to Rhonda and me before. Now that I know all the facets of the "Forry case" as it has unfolded, I can say that this calls to mind a certain comparison with the missing slides of the mask from Zimbabwe. Of course, those were physical slides. The photos I was missing were digital files which I definitely had not erased.

As Paul, Rhonda and I pondered this unanticipated anomaly, the obvious possibility arose in our minds that maybe HFJA was involved. It was reasonable to hypothesize the possibility that HFJA (a.k.a. Forry) had come to know me as a function of participating in a single-blinded mediumship reading with me (with Catherine Yunt) as well as multiple sessions working with me with the equipment. (The second single-blinded mediumship reading, with the Israeli psychic Orit Ish Yemeni Tomer, had not yet taken place.)

Other synchronicities transpired that weekend, but none were as baffling and meaningful as the missing "Starry Night" photos.

Given that:

(1) the van Gogh "Starry Night" painting had been so meaningful to Rhonda and me well before we saw the *Midnight in Paris* movie and subsequently discovered that my photos of the poster were missing, and

(2) van Gogh and "Starry Night" had also been so meaningful to Paul that he did a whole fictionalized film about van Gogh, combined with

(3) the extreme improbability of our purchasing a yellow hat similar to the yellow hat worn by the van Gogh character in Paul's *Starry Night* poster, only minutes before seeing *The Life After Death Project* by Yellow Hat Productions, then

(4) thus it is reasonable to consider whether HFJA might be attempting to give Rhonda and me a personal taste of the medicine he had been prescribing for Paul since HFJA passed.

However, I would need to witness more than just a single physical anomaly, no matter how unique and improbable it was, to convince me that HFJA was involved. Remember, the H in HFJA stands for "hypothesized." With this in mind, it appears that HFJA knew this fact about me because other extraordinary anomalies followed.

Let's start with the ones that were visible on my computer screen, and which I photographed to document them.

The sensor that we used for the initial, apparent appearance of Forry was a sensor placed at the top of my computer monitor. While I was filmed explaining that for *The Life After Death Project*, at the moment I uttered that explanation, a response pattern instantly showed up on the computer screen. The bar graph generated vertical bars at that moment that went right off the charts.

An "off the charts" response at a key moment in the research with Forry.

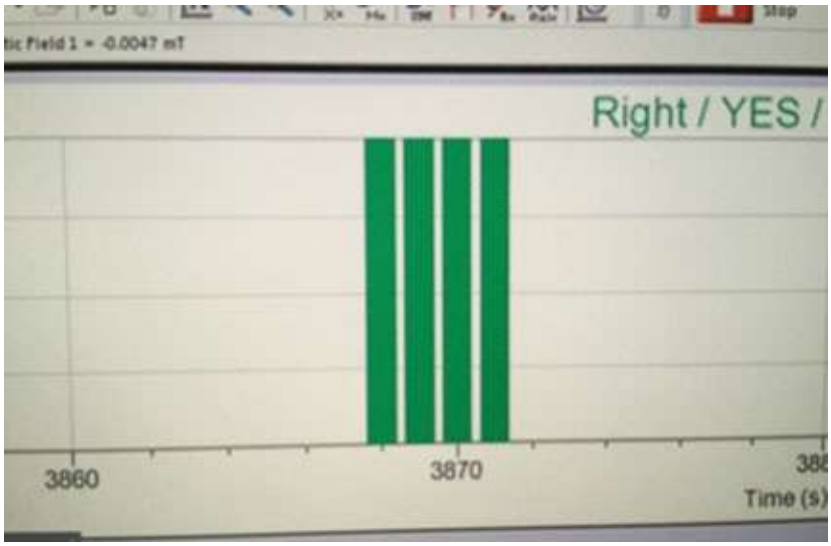
My graph has a vertical scale with one, two, three and four. I sometimes jokingly refer to them as “singles,” “doubles,” “triples” – and you know all about the home runs from what I’ve told you about “Hypothesized Harry Houdini” (HHH). That simple baseball analogy helps in expressing what happens.

Maybe five percent of the time or three percent of the time you’ll get a triple. You very rarely see a home run. And occasionally it will go past the four level, and as you know I call that a “home run out of the park.”

About a week or two weeks before Rhonda and I met up with Paul Davids in Sedona to see the rough cut of his *Life After Death Project*, there started to be an anomaly that would occur. Instead of getting that rare four or five – the home run or home run out of the park – there would be a twenty… or a thirty. Or even a two hundred.

A few nights before Rhonda and I left for Sedona, something totally extraordinary happened. It was late at night, twenty-five after one in the morning, and I just decided to come into the lab because I was dreaming about a synchronicity related to Forry. I turned on the recorder to capture what was happening with the bar graph data on the computer monitor, and as soon as I did, I saw a gigantic event occurring. It was one of those rare and extraordinary, huge anomalies. There were four vertical bars side by side on the graph, each going to the very top of the scale.

I soon discovered that the anomalies were not random. They would occur at special moments.



Timed as if it were a direct response from Forry, the four vertical bars went to

the top of the graph – four home runs side by side.

For example, I spoke into the recorder that night to explain that I had awakened in the middle of the night after having a dream related to Paul Davids and Sedona, and as soon as I said those words, another anomaly appeared on the computer screen. Another big one appeared on the computer's moving real-time graph.

I was so excited I blurted out:

"Oh, there's another anomaly, it happened, it happened, it happened! I was so hoping it would. We captured it right now!"

The science fiction of today is sometimes the science fact of tomorrow. And it's becoming clear that that's the amazing thing of what Forry was all about – he promoted science fiction as a futurist, foreseeing a time when what was considered impossible would become reality.

Frequently when I am conducting experiments with this system in the lab, I will speak to what I call my Sacred Promise Team. My hypothesis is that I have been in touch with four specific spirits on the Other Side. They include HHH (Hypothesized Harry Houdini), HSS (Hypothesized Susy Smith), a spirit I call Sophia and another I refer to as Peter (not his real name).

The night all those anomalies appeared, I was about to ask the Sacred Promise Team aloud: "Is Forry going to be able to use this technology?" However, before I even said it, while I was just thinking it, a "yes" response occurred on the computer bar graph.

As you know, at this point in the research, I proceed from the hypothesis that these spirits can hear me – not only my voice, but my very thoughts.

One of the things I've done, that I think is one of the reasons these experiments have worked, is that I've given them (the Sacred Promise Team) the opportunity to learn how to use the equipment. So it's like learning how to use a musical instrument or learning how to type. You have to learn how to interact with this technology.

That night I asked aloud: "Forrest, have you… if this is you… have you been practicing with this technology?"

Forty-five seconds went by without a response on the bar graph, so that was a "no."

I then asked: "If we gave you permission to use this equipment… are you waiting for an invitation to use this equipment…?"

A "yes" response immediately appeared on the bar graph.

I continued: “Are you waiting for an invitation from me, specifically?”

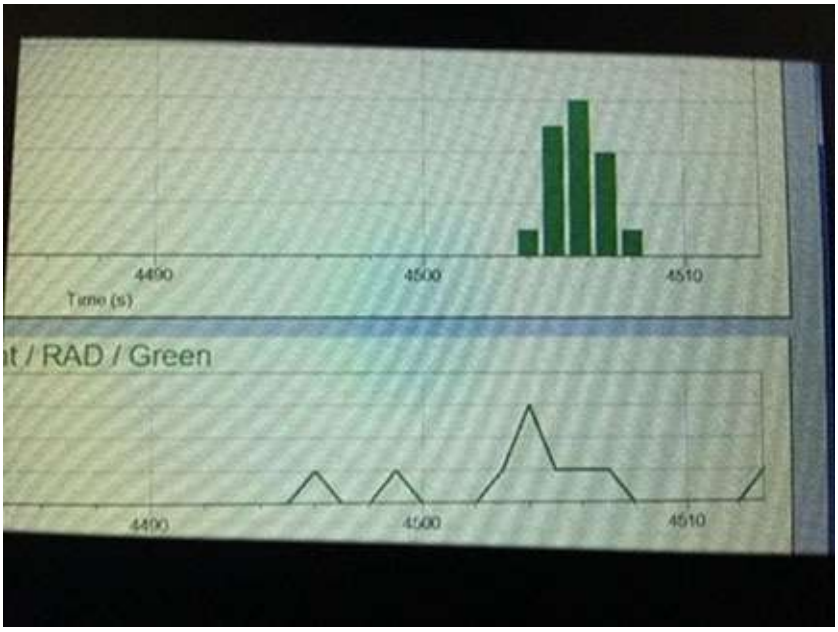
The immediate response that appeared was a double-yes.

These collaborating spirits (the Departed Hypothesized Co-Investigators) can be invited to come into the laboratory in the middle of the night, when no human being is present, when the computer is completely automating the experiment, and then like phone messages, you wake up the next morning – and you download the messages – in this case the data – and then the data is analyzed statistically.

The night I have been telling you about, I then asked if Forry Ackerman should be added to the Sacred Promise Team as correspondent number five.

I said aloud: “Okay, I’m now saying to you tonight, Forry, that I am personally giving you this permission, as long as the Team agrees, and I want to make sure that the Team agrees, but then of course that’s–”

At that moment I stopped in mid-sentence as I looked at the computer graph. There was a large burst of energy in five measurable parts. A half-single, then nearly a triple, then a solid triple, then a double, and then down to a half-single. It was a very large energy burst.



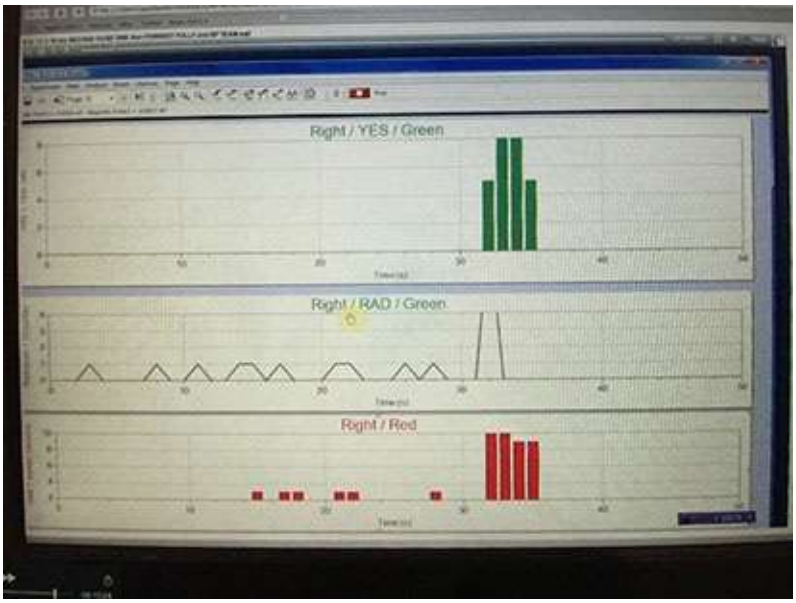
A large burst of energy in five measurable parts. A half-single, then nearly a triple, then a solid triple, then a double, and then down to a half-single.

I then asked: “So this is not going to take practice… just permission?”

As soon as I said the word “permission,” there were the following

significant energy bursts on the bar graph shown in the next photo.

I decided to establish with Forry that a triple on the bar graph would henceforth be his identifier on the detection system. If I spoke to Forry and got a triple response, it would be his confirmation that I was communicating with him. I'm excited to report that I have had success in using this system. Again and again, after a response is requested from Forry, a triple shows up.



This response showed that the Sacred Promise Team agreed that Forrest J Ackerman had permission to communicate in spirit as part of their group.

As of that night, I could say that this attempted communication with Forrest J Ackerman was no longer science fiction. It was the cutting edge of science possibility.

The next anomaly worth sharing did not take place in the lab and had nothing to do with my system of real-time bar graph measurement with sensors. It was an instance involving the anomalous appearance of orange juice. Yes, you read that correctly. Orange juice! That's orange juice with a possible relationship to Forry – or HFJA, Hypothesized Forrest J Ackerman!

The back story is at least as weird as the front story itself. It involves how we discovered the apparently anomalous orange juice. The front story involves how we inferred it might have been related to HFJA.

On a Thursday morning, after returning from a trip to drop off a visiting colleague, John Streife, at the Tucson airport, I noticed an apparently new bottle of orange juice in the refrigerator. The brand name was Simply Orange, and this

detail becomes important soon enough.

The bottle caught my attention because of the large degree of pulp sediment visible on the bottom of the bottle, implying that it had not been moved in a couple of days. I presumed that Rhonda had purchased the juice (Rhonda does most of the food shopping in our home). I do not typically notice recently purchased orange juice in the refrigerator, and there was no reason for me to ponder the juice further at that time.

Rhonda came home about two hours later, and to my surprise called to me from the kitchen asking me if I had purchased the bottle of orange juice! This really caught my attention. In the years we had known each other, Rhonda had never asked me such a question. I said no. Rhonda said in jest: “Maybe it was a materialization.” Rhonda thought I was pulling her leg about the orange juice, and I thought she was pulling my leg. We did not discuss it further.

Then, on Friday morning Rhonda brought up the mysterious orange juice again. It turned out that she was quite serious this time. Rhonda was convinced she had not purchased the new orange juice. In fact, that Thursday Rhonda had decided to bring home the remainder of the fresh orange juice she had purchased with her bagel because she knew that she did not have the time to purchase a new bottle of orange juice for the house. Rhonda was planning to serve the remainder of the fresh orange juice on Friday to accompany special bread which she had purchased from a favorite restaurant on Tuesday. Hence, orange juice was clearly on her mind.

I was convinced that I had not purchased the new bottle of orange juice. Rhonda was convinced that she had not purchased the new bottle of orange juice. We did not employ a cleaning person, and no one had keys to our home except us.

We were stymied. Could one of us selectively have lost the memory of having purchased this bottle of orange juice? If this was the explanation, what (or who) might have caused us specifically to forget purchasing the orange juice?

Given the weird things that were seemingly happening associated with HFJA, we wondered whether HFJA might be involved with the mysterious orange juice – either by selectively impairing our memory for purchasing the juice or even, in theory, HFJA producing an orange juice “apport!” I took multiple pictures of the orange juice, first in the refrigerator and then on the dining room table.

I decided to call Paul and tell him about the orange juice. I presumed Forry had no connection to orange fruit or the color orange. I could not have been

more mistaken. First, I learned that Forry had a cat named “Mr. Orange.” I have never known anyone who named any of their pets – dogs, cats, horses, *etc.* – Mr. (or Mrs.) Orange.

Second, I learned that a producer who had been a close friend of Forry’s has an email address spelled “Oranj.” Do you know anyone with an email address related to orange?

Third, I learned that this producer has a cat named “Mr. Orange” in honor of Forry’s cat named Mr. Orange.

Fourth, this producer was working on a film titled *Blood Orange* which involved oranges!

This producer was Sean Fernald, whom Paul has discussed at length in the chapter “Sean Asks for a Sign.” Remember the bottle of Las Rocas de San Alejandro wine? And the spider bites?

As a capper, Paul pointed out that Orange Drive in Hollywood was the location of the hostel where the two Canadian filmmakers had stayed (Ian Paul Johnston and Michael MacDonald) when they received the ACKERMAN000 computer message – and the computer voice that said “Oh my God, no way!”

There were a number of other strange events which happened around that time potentially related to HFJA, and this included John Striefe, the person I dropped off at the airport. John has a strong interest in parapsychology, especially “macro psychokinesis.” Sometimes called macro PK, this is the claim that some people can use their minds to influence physical objects.

While he was in Tucson, John mentioned that he and his wife had had four prior cats, and that they were seriously thinking about getting a fifth cat. Before leaving Tucson, I took John to a special Native American store called Bahti. There he found a unique, five cat “story teller pot” which he decided to purchase for his wife. I had never seen a story teller pot involving cats (and I have examined hundreds of story teller pots over the years). I took a few photos of the five cat pot to celebrate John finding such a relevant gift. I showed the photos to John, and I even emailed one to him.

Fast forward. When I spoke with Paul on Friday, and heard about the two cats named “Mr. Orange,” I went to my phone to send Paul a copy of the images I had taken of the five cat story teller pot. These special cat pot photos were, you guessed it, gone. I could not find them, and neither could Rhonda. You can’t make this stuff up.

I wondered, was this a replication of the missing *Midnight in Paris* poster photos that incorporated van Gogh’s painting “Starry Night?”

What was even weirder about all of this was that a few days later, when I

checked my iPhone, the cat pot photos were back! Yes, it was possible that I unconsciously missed seeing the cat pot photos, and that Rhonda unconsciously missed seeing them too. Just as it is remotely possible that either Rhonda or I had purchased the bottle of orange juice and selectively forgot that we did so. In fact, this mechanism would be the easiest way for a spirit like HFJA to get our attention without actually having to manipulate the physical world himself.

There was another twist to the orange juice matter, however. Paul had driven from seeing Rhonda and me in Tucson all the way to his vacation home in Santa Fe, New Mexico (where the ink obliteration occurred). No one had been staying at the house, and the refrigerator should have been empty.

When he went into the house, before going grocery shopping, he opened the refrigerator to be sure it had been left with clean shelves on the last trip. The only item in his refrigerator was a brand new bottle of Simply Orange, the same brand that appeared for us. Like ours, it had a lot of pulp sediment at the bottom.

It turned out that Paul learned rather quickly the explanation for how the orange juice turned up in his house. He had a friend in Los Alamos who had the house keys and who would stop by occasionally to check up on things. He called her to ask about this, and she said that on her latest trip, she had been grocery shopping just before arriving at his place, and she suddenly had realized that she had purchased "the wrong kind" of orange juice for her. She had wanted something low calorie, and this was not. So rather than return it to the grocery store, she decided perhaps Paul would want it when he got to town, so she left it in his refrigerator.

It was an extraordinary synchronicity, given what had just happened with Rhonda and me in Tucson – even the same brand!

If there are hidden unseen forces at work that facilitate these kinds of synchronicities taking place, one has to sense a parallel in what happened with the bottle of 2004 Las Rocas de Alejandro wine that Hollace had brought to the Big Bear Lake house. In that case, it was just the right bottle of wine to draw a rare connection that brought to mind Sean and his wedding and Forry Ackerman as a guest of that wedding in 2004. In this case, the orange juice that was found to be the only item in the Santa Fe refrigerator was the perfect match for the unopened, new bottle in ours, but unlike Paul, we could never explain how, in the precise physical sense, the orange juice showed up for us.

Other details clearly reinforced that the anomalies seemed directed and purposeful. The missing photos of the *Midnight in Paris* movie poster never reappeared. Something clearly odd was going on. It looked, and felt, like something the amazing HFJA might do.

The third example is the most difficult one for me to forget. The reason is that it happened literally underneath me in the presence of four other people – Rhonda, Paul, and two of his friends who were visiting with him in Tucson on a subsequent trip. Here is the quick story.

Paul and two of his friends (Rochanya Generous of Santa Fe and David W. Smith, a cinematographer from London) were visiting with Rhonda and me on a Saturday. We were discussing Forry and *The Life After Death Project*. All of a sudden we heard an alarm from an electric clock going off. Searching for the sound revealed that it was coming from a small battery operated alarm clock hidden in the back of the seat of my chair.

I knew the clock was there. I had purposely placed it there. I would occasionally pull it out to see what time it was (now to tell the time I use an iPad mini which is situated behind my chair). In the three or more years that the clock had been in this position, the alarm had never gone off. Nor had I ever set it. I presumed I must have somehow moved in a funny position and set off the alarm.

However, when Paul looked at the clock, his face went white (at least it appeared that way to me). Guess what time the alarm was set for, the time it actually went off? You guessed it, the exact time that Forry died. The identical time featured in the painting that serves as the poster for *The Life After Death Project* movie.

Though the precise mechanism as to how this happened will likely never be known, the uncanny timing of the alarm going off in the presence of five people who were focused on Forry, at precisely his time of death, is noteworthy to say the least.

When I say "precisely his time of death," I must clarify that. There are two times a day that the hands of a clock are at two minutes to twelve – right before noon and right before midnight. The point is, the clock appears the same at both of those times. Forry died at two minutes to midnight. My alarm clock went off at two minutes to noon.

The appearance of the hands on the clock at both times, whether day or night, is identical.

Paul informed me that a similar thing happened with Ron Waite, a former assistant of Forry from decades ago who at the time this happened lived in Carlsbad, New Mexico. Ron had begun sending Paul memorabilia he had gathered from Forry through the years. Ron was divesting and decided Paul should be custodian of his items that once belonged to Forry. Ron had been out of touch with Forry for so many years, he had no idea the date of Forry's death or what time he died. Nevertheless, the hands on a *Wizard of Oz* watch that had

belonged to Forry, and that Ron had sent to Paul, were at a few minutes to twelve when it arrived in the mail.

(Note: Sadly, Ron Waite died suddenly of a heart attack in September, 2015, just a few days before the incident in which *Phantom of the Opera* began playing inexplicably on Paul's iPod. In a sense it was prescient that he divested himself of Forry's former possessions by sending them to Paul. Ron Waite was not destined to be with us in the body much longer.)

There were other anomalies that happened to me during that visit from Paul, who has already shared one in particular with you, and I won't go into more detail about that, because it would probably give me a headache. It's the incident when I experienced a roll of toilet paper moving, changing locations in my private bathroom that no one else had entered. It certainly got my attention.

What matters here is that hopefully you can now appreciate that Rhonda and I were no longer innocent and agnostic bystanders to Paul's journey. We were becoming active participants in it, having experiences we would never have guessed were possible.

The same occurred to Dr. John Allison when he began examining the anomalies that had happened to Paul, most notably the ink obliteration.

It's simply impossible when faced with multiple direct personal experiences to deny the reality of their occurrence.

V. Taking Stock

If you are a skeptical reader, you might be thinking: "These incidents about orange juice are not science. Neither is the incident about disappearing digital photos of a movie poster that vanished from an iPhone. Is this research?" And you are correct to pose the question. With the exception of the bar graph data, this is not laboratory science – and even that happened so spontaneously we were not prepared to set up controls that night and efforts at rigid replication. This is about collecting data in real life as it occurs – unpredicted… and unpredictable.

Criteria 1 and 2 address scientific theory and research, and you recall that we discussed these criteria in some depth in prior chapters. As mentioned above, when all the evidence is taken into account, Criteria 1 and 2 seem to stand tall, making an impressive "V" sign. The afterlife research clearly supports the many logical and theoretical reasons for believing that life beyond death is real.

The present chapter has been focused on direct personal experiences in real

life. We might think of this as being in a category of unexpected symbolic incidents… extraordinary synchronicities, sometimes with demonstrable physical effects.

Just as most of us have never orbited the moon, and relatively few of us have driven a Lamborghini, probably relatively few of you have had a collection of experiences as I confess in this chapter happened to me. Or experiences such as those that have repeatedly happened to Paul, Dr. Allison and Jack Kelleher. Taken together, these direct personal experiences point in one direction – that life after death is real, and that some spirits – certainly including Forrest J Ackerman – have made a special point of letting us know they are still here and care about us deeply.

Armed with the information regarding Criteria 1 - 4, we can now consider Criterion 5 – whether Criteria 1 - 4 pass the test of responsible and justified skepticism.

24. RESPONSIBLE SKEPTICISM OF CRITERIA 1 - 4

Science is ultimately a systematic process of truth seeking. Scientists are trained to be conservative. We are taught to err on the side of being cautious when it comes to drawing conclusions based on evidence. One of the hallmarks of the process of science is critical evaluation. This includes critical evaluation of theories, methods, findings and interpretations for the purpose of being as accurate and responsible as possible.

I can vividly recall a moment when I was a senior at Cornell University in the spring of 1966 when this message became super clear. I was in the process of writing my honors thesis in the field of psychophysiology, and I was reviewing the provocative conclusions of a paper published in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*. The authors wrote the following words:

"We are moved toward the acceptance of the possibility that 'X' is possible."

The "X" is not important. "X" could be anything. In the paper I was reading, "X" was "operant conditioning of autonomic responses."

Notice what the authors were concluding.

First, they were "moved toward."

Second, what were they moved toward? They were moved toward the "acceptance."

Third, what were they moved toward the acceptance of? They were moved toward the acceptance of the "possibility."

Fourth, what possibility might they be moved toward accepting? That "X" was "possible!"

In sum, the authors were (1) moved toward (2) the acceptance of (3) the possibility that (4) "X" was possible.

It is hard to be more cautious than this in drawing a conclusion. And in the context of their pioneering paper, they were being appropriate and responsible in expressing such caution.

Their paper was only one of a handful of reports which was proposing a then radical new theory of voluntary control and learning in the body. It would take hundreds of experiments conducted in many laboratories over decades before a strong conclusion supporting their controversial research was justified.

This is the kind of skepticism I practice. It is an open minded, careful questioning and discerning approach to the process of discovery. It attempts to examine information accurately and comprehensively, and it gives alternative explanations a fair hearing in light of the available evidence. It is genuine skepticism. As I previously indicated, I call this "Type I Skepticism."

Sadly, there are individuals who claim to be "skeptics" who are not open minded. They do not engage in careful questioning. They are not discerning in their evaluation of evidence.

Though they may claim – often insistently – that they are undecided and seek the truth, in practice they are disbelievers or "unbelievers." They hold strong beliefs about what must be impossible.

Furthermore, they often engage in irresponsible and unjustified evaluation of theories, methods, findings, and conclusions which challenge their convictions about what is possible in nature and the cosmos. This is pseudo-skepticism. I call this "Type II Skepticism."

One way to spot Type II Skeptics is their tendency to make strong statements. Often they are not aware that they are lacking in the expression of caution. These individuals will typically make definitive, often arrogant, and sometimes nasty statements. They will regularly make definitive statements such as "There is no evidence which justifies this claim" or "There is no scientific theory which says this is possible" or "Science has established that this cannot be true."

When individuals make such dogmatic and erroneous statements concerning the totality of the research literature on life after death, for example, these individuals are an embarrassment to truth seeking and the spirit of scientific inquiry.

As mentioned earlier, Carl Sagan was fond of saying "Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence." I could not agree more.

The question before us is whether the totality of the evidence concerning the late Forrest J Ackerman is "extraordinary enough" to justify the extraordinary claim that HFJA's spirit (1) continues to exist and (2) is playing a meaningful role in Paul's life (and in the lives of others as well, including mine).

My approach to evaluating such evidence is to consider each of the five Criteria, and this includes open-mindedness, careful questioning, and responsible

discernment.

We can think of Criterion 5 as being the "thumb" of FACT. In some respects, Criterion 5 is the most important finger for grasping and holding on to a conclusion.

It is important to understand that I do not engage in the process primarily for you. This is the process I engage in for myself. I need to engage in this process of systematic re-evaluation and questioning again and again (and again), because I am such a well-trained questioner – an "orthodox agnostic." In fact, I depend on my skeptical thumb to insure that whatever conclusions I take hold of are as responsible and fair as possible.

I. Skepticism of Criterion 1 – Reason and Theory

In Chapter 19, we considered three examples of logic and theory which support the idea that consciousness can survive physical death, and therefore that someone such as Forry can – if he is suitably motivated – make his presence known to those who matter to him, in spite of the fact that he is physically deceased. The examples were:

(1) How the three methods of neuroscience produce evidence which is consistent with the conclusion that the brain is not the creator or source of consciousness but actually serves as an antenna-receiver-filter for it.

(2) How light has a kind of immortality, and our light does too, and

(3) How sometimes we need to go into the dark in order to see the light.

I selected these examples partly because they are so straightforward and easy to understand. Concerning example 1, try as I might, I have been unable to find a conceptual flaw in my description of the three methods (correlation, stimulation and removal) used by neuroscience, and how these are the same methods used in electrical engineering as applied to antenna-receiving-filtering systems such as televisions (or cell phones). I have shared this parallel with hundreds of scientists. Thus far no scientist has found a flaw in my reasoning.

Yes, many of the scientists do not like the implications of the reasoning as it applies to our understanding of the relationship between mind and brain, and as far as I can tell, most scientists then ignore it, but that is not pertinent. What matters here is that example 1 passes the responsible and justified Criterion 5

test.

The same applies to examples 2 and 3. I have yet to find a physicist or astrophysicist who argues that patterns of information expressed in photons (i.e., the electromagnetic spectrum, which includes visible light) do not continue for billions of years in the vacuum of space.

I have yet to find a physicist or astrophysicist who can responsibly and justifiably make the statement that this fact does not apply to patterns of information expressed in photons either (1) reflected or (2) emitted by the human body. And I have yet to find a physicist or astrophysicist who disagrees with the observation that stars are most visible in the dark, and that the best way to measure tiny intensities of light is under pitch black conditions.

Again, many of the physicists and astrophysicists do not like the implications of the reasoning, and as far as I can tell, most of them then ignore it, but that is not the point. What matters here is that the examples stand up to responsible and justified questioning.

When Type II Skeptics make the definitive statement that neuroscience has proven that the brain creates consciousness, or that there are no known scientific mechanisms by which information and energy can continue beyond the physical form, they are either expressing their ignorance of the three examples discussed in the Criteria I chapter, or they are choosing to ignore these basic facts.

It is important to remember that these are only three examples of logic and theory which support the life after death hypothesis. There are a number of additional examples which also pass the Criterion 5 test (e.g., quantum entanglement and quantum systems theory, but they are beyond the scope of this book).

In sum,ary, I have come to the conclusion that all things considered, there is considerable logic and theory (Criterion 1) for us to entertain seriously the hypothesis that survival of consciousness after physical death is possible (and if pushed, I would at this point say highly probable). If this sounds like I am a Type I Skeptic, that’s because I am.

How does this analysis apply to HFJA? Since the logic and theory in principle applies to everyone who has ever lived, this probability includes Forry.

II. Skepticism of Criterion 2 – Scientific Evidence

In Chapter 20, I described five areas of research which provide evidence consistent with the life after death hypothesis. They were:

Research Area 1: Survey Research of After Death Communication (ADC)

Research Area 2: Near Death Experience (NDE) Research

Research Area 3: Reincarnation Research in Children

Research Area 4: Controlled Laboratory Research with Mediums

Research Area 5: Spirit Communication Technology

We discussed how none of these areas, by themselves, was sufficient to serve as "proof" of life after death. However, the additive combination of evidence for these five areas of research – when viewed as a whole – provides compelling (some would say conclusive) support for the life after death hypothesis.

Each area has its own weaknesses. For example, survey research requires that the respondents be responsible and report their memories as accurately as they can. It is well established that human memory is fallible. Our memories typically fade with time. Our emotions color our memories. We all suffer from what social psychologists call "confirmational bias," remembering those things which tend to support our beliefs and biases, and forgetting those which do not.

There was interesting memory research with visitors to Disneyland as subjects. Months after their visit, when shown an illustration of Bugs Bunny (a Warner Bros character), a significant minority of Disneyland visitors claimed Bugs Bunny was one of the characters they saw at Disneyland. This isn't confirmational bias as much as it is an indication that people have a hard time discriminating, in their memory, between things that are similar – i.e., some people might think Bugs Bunny looks like a Disney character and misidentify what they saw.

However, does this mean that we should completely distrust human memory, and therefore dismiss everything that people remember? Of course not; the key here is to be discerning. We should remember the limitations of human memory, and then search for replicated patterns of information which cut across age, sex, religion, nationality, and yes, even belief in life after death.

A responsible and fair examination of the survey research on ADC's reveals that certain patterns are sufficiently robust as to justifiably be included as evidence consistent with the life after death hypothesis.

In the case of Forry, evidence of apparent ADC's related to Forry was reported by many people, and their reports were carefully recorded by Paul. Again, by itself, such evidence can be questioned and is not sufficient to establish the presence of Forry. However, in additive combination with the other kinds of evidence collected by Paul (e.g., with research mediums), the evidence takes on greater strength and meaning.

Here is not the place to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the five research areas. That would take pages and pages. What matters here is that you know that I have engaged in this process, and in each case, I have come to the conclusion that the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses in terms of the extensiveness and replicability of the evidence and the care with which the data has been collected, analyzed and interpreted.

III. Abuse of Truth in Wikipedia

I do want to mention how mediumship research is often portrayed in Type II skeptical publications, because it illustrates how irresponsible and unjustified the portrayal is. At the time I wrote these words (November 11, 2014), here is how mediumship research was described in Wikipedia.

First, the summary paragraph:

"In recent years, scientific researchers have attempted to ascertain the validity of claims of mediumship. An experiment undertaken by the British Psychological Society led to the conclusion that the test subjects demonstrated no mediumistic ability. Other experiments which have seemingly found evidence of paranormal activity have been criticized for not establishing thorough test conditions."

Reading this summary paragraph one would think that (1) some research had been conducted on mediumship, and that (2) the British Psychological Society had itself conducted an experiment that found no evidence of genuine mediumship, and also that (3) other experiments were not valid because of the lack of "thorough test conditions." In other words, what little research had been conducted was severely flawed, and a major organization had dismissed the phenomenon.

Sadly, besides the fact that this conclusion is irresponsible and unjustified (described below), it is critically inaccurate. The truth is that the British Psychological Society did not undertake the experiment that failed to replicate the positive findings of other scientists. The experiment was conducted by a Type II Skeptic in England, and his negative results were reported in a journal published by the British Psychological Society.

This is not nitpicking. It is an important discernment of what actually transpired.

Further into the Wikipedia article on Mediumship, the author(s) wrote:

The VERITAS Research Program of the Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health in the Department of Psychology at the University of Arizona, run by the parapsychologist Gary Schwartz, was created primarily to test the hypothesis that the consciousness (or identity) of a person survives physical death. Schwartz claimed his experiments were indicative of survival, but do not yet provide conclusive proof. The experiments described by Schwartz have received criticism from the scientific community for being inadequately designed and using poor controls.

Ray Hyman discovered many methodological errors with Schwartz's research including: "Inappropriate control comparisons," "Failure to use double-blind procedures," "Creating non-falsifiable outcomes by reinterpreting failures as successes" and "Failure to independently check on facts the sitters endorsed as true." Hyman wrote "Even if the research program were not compromised by these defects, the claims being made would require replication by independent investigators." Hyman criticizes Schwartz's decision to publish his results without gathering "evidence for their hypothesis that would meet generally accepted scientific criteria… they have lost credibility."

Sounds pretty damning, doesn't it?

The problem is that these paragraphs, with their highly skeptical bias, turn out to be (1) inaccurate in critical points, (2) irresponsible in terms of balance, and (3) unjustified in terms of their take home messages.

My intention here is not to engage in "tit for tat." My purpose is to help you learn how to distinguish between Type I and Type II Skepticism.

Here are a few key points:

1. For the record, I am not a parapsychologist. My Master's degree from Harvard is in clinical psychology, and my Ph.D. from Harvard is in personality psychology and psychophysiology. Yes, some of my current research falls within the broad area of parapsychology, and I have presented a few scientific papers at parapsychological meetings, but this does not justify labeling me as a "parapsychologist" (which has pejorative connotations) as if this were my primary academic training, professional history, and identity.

2. Yes, I am careful to point out that my experiments, by themselves, do not provide conclusive proof of survival. However, this should not be viewed as a criticism of me or the work (which is implied in the description), but as a responsible position to take as a Type I Skeptic.

3. And yes, a number of Type II Skeptics have criticized vocally my

mediumship research. However, does this necessarily mean that their criticisms are accurate, fair, and responsible? Of course not. Some illustrations follow:

4. Hyman did write a review claiming that I did not employ appropriate control conditions, and that I did not employ double blind procedures. However, the facts all indicate otherwise – and the facts are important. One of the very first experiments I published in mediumship research was a double-blinded experiment, and this experiment was featured early on in my book *The Afterlife Experiments*. Hyman conveniently ignored this important experiment. Moreover, Wikipedia conveniently failed to mention other double-blinded experiments that we (and other laboratories) have conducted on mediumship, and also that I (and other scientists independently) have conducted even more rigorously controlled experiments using triple-blinded procedures. You would never know these essential facts from the Wikipedia article.

5. It is semi-true that my research team "failed to independently check on facts the sitters endorsed as true." I say semi-true because in our early research we requested that subjects (1) justify every one of their ratings, (2) provide explanations for how they made each rating, and (3) indicate in each instance whether the information could be independently verified. Moreover, in *The Afterlife Experiments* book I give numerous examples where sitter's ratings were independently verified. For example, a medium claimed that a grandmother had two large poodles, a black one and a white one. The sitter later showed me a picture of her grandmother with her large black and white poodles. Obviously it is not practical to attempt to validate independently every piece of information a person rates in every experiment. Simply stated, Hyman made a definitive and sweeping conclusion (a characteristic of Type II Skeptics) which turns out to be false in terms of its generalized meaning, and Wikipedia cited it as if it were the gospel truth.

6. Hyman did conclude that I was publishing evidence that did not meet "generally accepted scientific criteria" and that in his eyes my research has lost its credibility – but that does not mean that his sweeping definitive conclusion was responsible, justified or fair. Yes, I have sometimes reported findings based upon exploratory studies, and I have specified that these experiments were exploratory. I have even described carefully selected case studies which provide important suggestions for future research. However, I regularly publish papers using well-accepted methods in psychological science, including experimental designs, data analyses and results reporting. Our controlled laboratory studies are published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and alternative interpretations of the findings are carefully considered. The reader of Wikipedia would never

know this.

The facts matter. When alleged skeptics (Type II Skeptics) make sweeping and all-encompassing claims that lead the reader to conclude that scientists conducting research in these fields are doing work that is sloppy, and that they are naïve, irresponsible and untrustworthy, the trusting reader is being misinformed. In a word, the reader is being duped. This is no way to engage in genuine scientific discovery and truth seeking. This practice represents the abuse of truth.

In the case of mediumship, the responsible and justified conclusion is quite the opposite of the biased position expressed in Wikipedia. Yes, some mediums are frauds. However, the facts indicate that some mediums are real. They have passed every responsible and fair experimental test designed to date. They have been tested in single-blind, double-blind, and triple-blind experiments. Some of these individuals are truly extraordinary, including the two mediums who performed single-blinded readings for Paul concerning HFJA.

Yes, these were not double-blinded research readings, but that does not mean that the information should be discounted. Quite the contrary; the readings add important information to the totality of the evidence regarding the possibility that Forry is making his presence known to those open to receiving it.

Let's be clear about what Paul and I are trying to prove. We are trying to determine whether the large collection of anomalies seemingly associated with HFJA can best be explained as evidence of survival of consciousness (his consciousness) after physical death. We are also trying to understand whether, if his consciousness survives, it has demonstrated the ability to interact with our physical world through physical phenomena that show deliberate intention.

IV. Skepticism of Criterion 3 – Community of Credible and Trustworthy Believers

In Chapter 21, I explained why it is valuable to know that people who are credible and trustworthy come to the same conclusions as we do. I illustrated the seven criteria (I called them the Seven S's) I require for making this determination:

The Seven S's are:

1. Successful
2. Smart
3. Skeptical

4. Sophisticated
5. Savvy
6. Straight, and
7. Sane

I have yet to meet a person who disagrees with this list, though some people might prefer to add additional items (or maybe define the criteria somewhat differently).

It is important to point out that I personally know a number of Type II Skeptics who meet 5 of the 7 criteria. The criteria they meet are Successful, Smart, Sophisticated, Savvy, and Sane. Where they fall down is in Skeptical (#3) and Straight (#6), though they would likely disagree with me vociferously about this.

In my experience Type II Skeptics typically claim they are open-minded, and they claim that they are willing to change their minds in the face of convincing logic and theory (Criterion 1) and evidence (Criterion 2). Moreover, Type II Skeptics typically claim that they sincerely value honesty and fairness, and they would (understandably) be deeply offended if they were thought of otherwise.

However, just because a person believes that they think and act a given way, and they make such claims, does not necessarily mean that they actually think and act this way. In psychology this is called "self-deception." None of us is immune from the potential for self-deception. It takes humility and bravery to "see ourselves in the mirror" and accept discrepancies between our beliefs and our actions when they occur.

A number of my graduate students and I, spanning my time at Harvard University, Yale University, and the University of Arizona, have conducted experiments on self-deception. We have published our findings in mainstream, peer-reviewed scientific journals. Moreover, for many years I was a senior member of the Clinical Psychology faculty at Yale University and the University of Arizona, and I have the training and skills to diagnose self-deception.

Hopefully you can now appreciate why I pay such close attention to potential self-deception in people (including myself). In fact, one of the reasons I collaborate with skilled clinical psychologists and psychiatrists is to check continually that I am not inadvertently deceiving myself (or others) about the profoundly important hypothesis of life after death. In fact, I consider honest self-awareness an important quality worthy of being developed in everyone, and this includes scientists.

In Chapter 22, I mentioned people who fit the Seven S's criteria, whose opinions have informed my own and provide me with further reasons to take the life-after death hypothesis seriously. They included:

1. A CEO of a major corporation
2. A former publisher who is the editor-in-chief of an award-winning newspaper
3. A former chairman of the department of surgery at a major university
4. A former chairman of the department of material sciences at a major university
5. An award winning composer for movies and television
6. A former high ranking staff member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,
7. The director of a major foundation, educated at Harvard University, and
8. A distinguished anthropologist who was the director of an internationally known research institute.

In the spirit of Criterion 5, I have reviewed this list and attempted to determine whether there were any responsible and justified reasons for challenging my evaluations of these people. Try as I might I cannot in good conscience dismiss any of these people as being untrustworthy.

In sum, I cannot find valid reasons for concluding that these individuals no longer deserve my admiration and respect. Yes, I can point out a given person's limitations (at least the ones I am aware of), but these do not impact the logic of my concluding that they meet each of the 7 S's criteria for being credible and trustworthy. Hence, Criterion 3 passes the test posed by Criterion 5.

V. Criterion 4 – Direct Personal Experiences

As we discussed in Chapter 22, it is not essential to have direct personal experiences of a given phenomenon to reach a responsible and justified conclusion about its veracity. You will recall the span of examples I offered – from walking on the moon to driving a Lamborghini – and appreciate that we can conclude that these things are real even though we have not experienced them directly. Nonetheless, there is no substitute for having direct experiences, especially when they involve phenomena which challenge our core belief systems.

I provided some prototypical personal experiences which collectively contribute to my emerging conclusion about the validity of the life after death hypothesis in general and HFJA (Hypothesized Forrest J Ackerman) in

particular. The examples were:

1. Verified warnings of car trouble from HSS (Hypothesized Susy Smith) through two different mediums

2. Replicated evidence of HHH (Hypothesized Harry Houdini) producing “home runs” using a silicon photomultiplier system.

3. Two spontaneous “kinesthetic intuitive moments” where I personally functioned in a medium-like fashion

4. Three instances associated with HFJA where uncanny physical anomalies occurred in my life (witnessed by Rhonda and others).

5. Evidence of HFJA and the Sacred Promise Team responding to direct questions as shown in photographs of the bar graphs from sensor experiments.

In the spirit of responsible and justified skepticism (Criterion 5), I have carefully reviewed each of these instances. I have discussed them with Rhonda and Paul (in particular) and corrected any inadvertent errors of substance. I have tried to play the “Devil’s Advocate” and find reasons to dismiss them. The truth is that I can’t find any responsible and justified reasons for dismissing them. As disconcerting as this fact may be, it is the truth.

Yes, we can consider possible alternative explanations for some of these direct personal experiences, particularly the observations from “real life” (as opposed to those based on laboratory experiments). However, when you combine Criteria 1, 2, 3 and 4 and you realize that you do not have responsible and justified reasons for rejecting them (Criterion 5), what are you left with? Collectively the totality of the evidence points in one primary direction – and that is the life after death hypothesis.

25. IRRESPONSIBLE SKEPTICISM AND VERITAS

I. From Responsible Reasoning to Justified Fear

When I engage in this "due diligence" process, I realize that I have very little reason not to conclude that life after death is real. The logic is inescapable. If this was a legal case, and I was serving on a jury, I should be reaching a "beyond reasonable doubt" conclusion. Not just about life after death in general, but HFJA in particular.

If any one person who has "died" has provided documented evidence of numerous (1) physical anomalies, (2) synchronicities, (3) validations from mediums, and (4) signaling with state-of-the-art technology, it is Forry. The probability that the total set of events associated with Forry reported in this book has occurred by chance is extraordinarily miniscule.

And yet, I experience emotional resistance creeping in, and I find myself wanting to jump back up on the fence of doubt.

Where does my doubt come from?

My continuing doubt does not come from (1) dubious logic and reason, (2) mediocre research evidence, (3) the absence of "Seven S's" believers, (4) a lack of convincing personal experiences or (5) a failure to engage in due diligence in re-evaluating 1-4.

My continuing doubt comes primarily from fear. What is the core fear? Fear of being accused by detractors, whoever they may be – accusations that what I now believe can't possibly be true, and therefore that I must be irresponsible, untrustworthy, and yes, even unethical.

And why do I have such fear? The reason is because such detractors exist, and they can sometimes be slanderous, malicious, and worse.

My fear of Type II Skeptics is not irrational; it is evidence-based. I have been viciously attacked by Type II Skeptics, and the scars are deep.

On numerous occasions I have experienced unfair, unjust, and even malicious reactions from certain people ever since I went public with this

research in the HBO documentary *Life Afterlife*. I have recounted examples of this extremely unprofessional and irresponsible behavior in *The Afterlife Experiments, The Truth about Medium* and *The Sacred Promise*.

Paul is no stranger to controversy, and he has experienced his fair share of this kind of hostility as well. Some of the responses to *The Life After Death Project* have been despicable, with deliberate misrepresentation of established facts and outright ignoring of scientific evidence or dismissing scientific evidence without anything approaching reasonable cause. The future will in due course reveal whether the same will happen after this book is published, or whether this effort will wholly succeed in its intention. And that intention is to take the case for life after death to the public at large and especially every variety of skeptic, and thereby bring about a change of attitude toward the legitimacy of the subject, the research and the existing evidence that supports our conclusions.

In the summer of 2015, in the Broadway show featuring the well-known magician team of Penn and Teller, toward the end of the show Penn and Teller included a fake mediumship act. According to Michael Anthony, the manager of the concessions in seven Broadway theatres (including the Marquis theatre which housed the Penn and Teller show), Penn regularly stated to the audience that:

"All people who say they are psychic or are mediums are frauds, liars and immoral, evil criminals."

Anthony went on to say that Penn repeatedly made this extreme statement believing it "so strongly (and with such animosity)."

As you are about to discover, Penn apparently has felt this way for a long time. The following account is adopted from my 2005 book *The Truth About Medium*. As you read this account, I encourage you to try to imagine how you would feel if this had happened to you.

II. The Lawrence O'Donnell/Penn Jillette Truth Abuse Fiasco

In the summer of 2003 I received a phone call from a producer in Los Angeles inviting me to appear as a guest for a possible new television series that they hoped would replace *The Rosie O'Donnell Show*. I was in New York City at the time, finishing work on my book *The G.O.D. Experiments*. The producer said she wanted me to appear as part of the pilot for the *The Lawrence O'Donnell Show*.

To encourage me, she told me a bit of O'Donnell's background. She stated that O'Donnell had been an undergraduate at Harvard and among other things

had been an award-winning writer of the television show *West Wing*, as well as a political analyst for MSNBC (he currently has a nightly news show on MSNBC).

She said that O'Donnell wanted to interview me about my book *The Afterlife Experiments* that presented scientific evidence addressing the controversial question of whether consciousness survives bodily death. The producer requested that I recommend some mediums who might be willing to be interviewed on the show as well. Two of the names I mentioned were Suzanne Northrop and someone whom I will call Alice Jackson.

The producer led me to believe that O'Donnell was personally interested in the topic of life after death and would carefully examine (and maybe read) the book before conducting the interview. I was told that O'Donnell was an intellectual, and that he would conduct a serious interview with me about the experiments and their implications. I was happy to participate in what I anticipated would be an honest discussion of the evidence, pro and con, and its implications. I agreed to be taped for the show which was scheduled to take place in a few weeks.

What happened at the taping was a complete shock to me.

When I got to the studio, both Northrop and Jackson were already there. We exchanged greetings and hugs. Jackson then took me aside and she said, "Gary, Susy is here and she has a warning for you."

I asked, "What could possibly happen here?"

Jackson replied matter of factly, "Susy says that you should be prepared to be ambushed."

Ambushed? Susy said "ambushed?" In front of hundreds of people, by a Harvard educated host-to-be who hoped his television show would be picked up by the networks?

It didn't compute.

However, after I was introduced to the surprise skeptic who had been invited to participate as well – Penn Jillette of Penn and Teller, the "Bad Boys of Magic" – I began to wonder. The producer had not told me that a skeptic would be included as part of the interview. Though I had been previously attacked by Type II Skeptics, and I was mindful of Susy's purported warning from Jackson, I was not prepared for what unfolded with Penn, and then O'Donnell.

When Penn took me aside and whispered angrily, "How can you believe those lying c__ts?" (the word he used was not "cats"), I began to become concerned.

I thought to myself, "How fortunate that the host is not Penn."

I tend to be a gentle person, especially with people I have never met. Penn's seething hostility was palpable, and I did not know what I would do if he became aggressive in public. I knew that Northrop and Jackson were both very tough. I knew that Jackson had received the warning to be prepared for a trap, thanks to the apparent message from Susy.

My concerns increased further when the lights came on, the music began, and O'Donnell came out to introduce our segment. He began by asking the audience of approximately two hundred people: "How many of you believe in survival of consciousness after death?" About 40 percent indicated yes.

He then asked, "How many of you are not sure whether consciousness survives death?" Again, about 40 percent indicated yes.

Then he said, "How many of you are thoughtful people and know that survival of consciousness is NOT true?" The remaining 20 percent proudly raised their hands.

I could not believe what I was hearing. O'Donnell was introducing our segment with his conclusion before we had even had our conversation, a conclusion that announced to the audience that his mind was already made up, and that if you were a "thoughtful" person, you agreed with him that survival of consciousness is not true.

O'Donnell was clearly implying that people who believed otherwise were "thoughtless" individuals who were allowing themselves to be conned by (1) unscrupulous, lying mediums and (2) gullible, if not deceiving, academic scientists – like me?

I would soon discover how thoughtless O'Donnell was himself.

The first portion of the segment involved O'Donnell conducting a nasty interview with Northrop and Jackson. He accused them of taking advantage of grieving people for fame and fortune. He goaded them to do a reading for him, on the spot. Neither Northrop nor Jackson was willing to take the bait.

The first portion ended for a commercial break. There was murmuring and discomfort in the audience. When the second portion resumed, Penn was invited to join the mediums. He was there as the sophisticated "skeptic" and "skilled magician."

Penn went on the attack and accused Northrop and Jackson of using fraud and cold reading. Both he and O'Donnell ignored the fact that a scientist (me) was about to be interviewed about controlled laboratory experiments that convincingly ruled out fraud and cold reading as plausible explanations for what Northrop and Jackson do.

The second portion then at last ended for another commercial break.

Northrop and Jackson were escorted off the set, but Penn remained. Would the interview with me include Penn? I was brought out and seated next to Penn.

O'Donnell had yet to come back from the break.

Penn was huge, well over six feet tall and heavy (at that time). Compared to my size of about five foot seven, he towered over me. Penn was seated to my right.

He leaned over and whispered in my ear, "I hate you!"

I was shocked. I turned to him, and gently but firmly said: "How can you hate me? You don't even know me?"

Penn replied more loudly and angrily: "You have taken my mother's memory in vain!"

I was appalled. I said more forcefully but still kindly, "How can I have taken your mother's memory in vain? I don't even know your mother."

Penn said, "You listen to those lying c__ts, and you even lie in your book!"

I lie in my book? I had no idea what he was talking about.

At that moment I felt that if I had been a bug, Penn would have squished me with satisfaction.

Before I had the opportunity to think about Penn's incensed accusations, O'Donnell returned and sat down on my left, sandwiching me between two closed-minded, hostile attackers. I began to wonder: "Would the scientific evidence reported in my book be given a fair hearing?"

Were the two of them setting me up to be ambushed?

Before the formal interview began, O'Donnell turned to me and whispered in my ear, "Were you an undergraduate at Harvard?"

I said, "No, I received my Ph.D. at Harvard."

O'Donnell then said, "So you are not a Harvard college graduate and I will not announce your Ph.D. on the show."

I said, "Excuse me? Do you seriously question whether I have a Harvard Ph.D.?"

O'Donnell replied, "I did not check to see if you have a Harvard Ph.D., and yes, I believe you are lying about the credentials listed on the jacket of your book."

I could not believe that I was hearing what he was saying. It is one thing to question whether mediums are real; it is quite another to question whether someone's Ph.D. is real. Apparently he or one of the show's researchers had called Harvard to ask if I have an undergraduate degree from there (my undergraduate degree is from Cornell University), but they had not asked for

verification of my Harvard Ph.D. And because they had not asked for and received that verification, O'Donnell was going to claim that I was lying about my degree? Incredible!

I then said, "From statements you made to Northrop and Jackson, it sounds to me that you have not read my book."

O'Donnell said, "That's right. I have no need to read your book. Since you have lied about your credentials, you have probably lied about the data you presented in your book!"

Before I had a chance to fathom what he just said, the cameras began to roll, and O'Donnell was announcing that his interview with me was to begin. The music came on, and O'Donnell was all smiles to the audience.

He asked me to tell the audience what my current position was at the University of Arizona. I explained that I was currently a professor of psychology, medicine, neurology, psychiatry and surgery.

O'Donnell then asked me: "Do you have an MD?"

I said "No."

He then asked: "Do you teach surgery to surgeons?"

I said, "Of course not, I am a psychologist, not a surgeon."

He then said, "You know, Dr. Schwartz, that Ph.D.'s cannot be professors in medical school departments, and that you are lying about your credentials."

I knew that the findings from mediumship research were unbelievable enough, but what was happening here seemed completely unimaginable. I began to explain to O'Donnell and the audience that Ph.D.'s from many different disciplines have research appointments in academic and clinical departments in medical schools. Various medical schools have staff members from fields including physics, bioengineering, biophysics, biostatistics, biochemistry, physiology, clinical and health psychology, medical sociology, medical anthropology and epidemiology. I attempted to explain that this practice occurs in medical schools throughout the U.S. – and that O'Donnell could easily confirm my academic appointments by contacting the University of Arizona.

O'Donnell was incensed. He would hear none of this.

I then decided to interview him and asked him, on camera, "Did you graduate from Harvard College?"

He said "Yes."

I asked, "Do you know what Harvard's motto is?"

He said "Yes."

I asked, "What is it?" and he said "Veritas."

I asked, “What does Veritas mean?” and he replied “Truth.”

I then said, “If you believe in Veritas, then I want you to call the University of Arizona to determine if I am lying to you and the public, or if you are mistaken.”

I further said, “I am asking you, in front of this audience, that when you learn from senior officials at the University of Arizona that the credentials listed on the book jacket are indeed correct, that you will announce on a future show – if you have a future show – that you were mistaken about my credentials and that you falsely accused me of lying.”

O’Donnell replied “Absolutely not!”

As you can probably guess, the interview went downhill from there. O’Donnell was not interested in the evidence. Neither was Penn. They were not interested in the experiments. What they were interested in was supporting their convictions, their “story,” that I was an irresponsible and fraudulent scientist working with fake mediums.

As the interview progressed, it became apparent that O’Donnell and Penn were not simply doing this for Jerry Springer “shock value” – they both seemed genuinely to believe that I was a liar. And they had no interest in checking the evidence to see if their story about my credentials was actually true.

The success of this pilot would guarantee O’Donnell a lucrative and reputation-making place on television, and he had apparently decided that exposing a highly reputed scientist to be a fraud would be one of the ingredients to convince the network he had the right ingredients for a successful show. Penn was there to support O’Donnell’s position.

III. Thoughts about the O’Donnell/Penn Approach

There is an old, cynical phrase: “Don’t let the facts get in the way of a good story.” This adage may be socially acceptable when you’re telling an entertaining story at a dinner party, but it is intellectually corrupt and appalling when you’re speaking to what you hope will be a television audience of millions. I often say that in science the phrase should be “Don’t let the good ‘stories’ (e.g., hypotheses or theories) get in the way of the evidence.”

I recognize that many intelligent, reasonable people do not yet believe that survival of consciousness is true. However, neither O’Donnell nor Penn were interested in examining the scientific evidence addressing life after death, much less considering the bigger philosophical and spiritual questions of an afterlife.

The experience proved to be an object lesson in how strong beliefs about a very emotional topic (in this instance, the possibility of an afterlife) can so cloud our judgments that we will no longer remain open to evidence of things that we easily can confirm or refute – such as whether Gary Schwartz holds professorships in multiple medical departments, or not.

I wondered, what is it that motivates the O'Donnells and Penns of the world to close their minds to questions – especially trivial questions that can easily be answered, such as the facts about my appointments?

Einstein put it this way: "The important thing is not to stop questioning." Einstein recommends that we should always remain open to new data and new ideas.

Although O'Donnell and Penn did not know it, they unwittingly gave me a gift. They showed me that in certain circumstances it is necessary for people who care about truth to become warriors for the truth.

Simply stated, what might be called "the Veritas War" had begun for me in a TV studio in Los Angeles.

O'Donnell and Penn were clearly angry with me – they viewed me as being a despicable scientist who would lie about his credentials and attempt to fool the public through the misuse or even fabrication of evidence. After the interview I told them I felt sorry that their convictions were so strong that they would not be willing to seek information that could confirm or disconfirm their cherished beliefs. They became furious.

I had been handed an important take-home lesson: just because people are intelligent, and even are highly educated, doesn't mean that they will be open to information and will practice evidence-based living.

Have you met any O'Donnells or Penns? Have you watched any O'Donnell-like or Penn-like people on television? Do you, consciously or unconsciously, practice an O'Donnell-like or Penn-like approach to some subjects? If truth matters, then it's time to stand up and say at least on some occasions that the O'Donnells and Penns of the world, like the Emperor, are not wearing any clothes.

I was extraordinarily grateful that Jackson had received information, apparently from Susy, warning me to be prepared for an ambush. Because I had been forewarned by information attributed to Susy – and I had been previously forewarned via other mediums by information also attributed to Susy – I was better prepared to cope with a frankly crazy situation I never could have imagined.

It is worth adding that O'Donnell was subsequently not offered the job of

hosting this new show. However, he has had a long, successful career on MSNBC as a political commentator.

IV. Enough is Enough! Standing Up for Forry

If you could put yourself in my shoes – or better yet, in my mind and heart – how would you feel if this had happened to you? How would you feel if you were accused of being not only naïve and sloppy, but even worse, irresponsible and unethical – and the accusations were patently false? At what point would you say that enough is enough?

With the Forry evidence, if the Type II Skeptic onslaught comes (and there are already a few online examples regarding *The Life After Death Project*, I am ready to shout "Enough is enough!"

I have reached this point. Why? The reason is that if anyone deserves our gratitude and appreciation, if not respect and admiration, it is Forry. If life after death is real, and if Forry is really here, then what he is doing is utterly amazing, deeply amusing and profoundly meaningful.

As you know, I was not aware that an amazing person named Forrest J Ackerman lived on the earth. I would not have had the imagination to create him as a fictional character. I only learned about him after he died, through the extraordinary experiences unfolding in Paul's (and others') lives. I came to admire and respect him – and then I came even to have a sense of him through his apparent involvement in my personal as well as professional life. He has, so to speak, become an "adopted Uncle Forry" for me.

Of course, if the life after death hypothesis is wrong, then there is no Uncle Forry – or anyone else for that matter. However, if the life after death hypothesis is right, then I feel super-privileged to have come to know him via the afterlife.

Hence, I do not want his reputation sullied through the actions of people who would resort to misrepresentations if not malicious deceptions to preserve their personal beliefs.

Some of those people are atheists and Type II Skeptics who knew Forry and supported his atheism while he lived. As Penn accused me of "defaming the memory of his mother," they assert that even to suggest that Forry is communicating from the Other Side defames the memory of a man who insisted that there is no Other Side. Those rants ignore everything that is presented here that is evidence to the contrary, but the story of the Type II Skeptic goes downhill from here. Let's talk about Geraldo Rivera.

In the Wikipedia article on Mediumship, the following paragraph was included:

"On Fox News on the 'Geraldo at Large' show, October 6, 2007, Geraldo Rivera and other investigators accused Schwartz as a fraud as he had overstepped his position as a university researcher by requesting over three million dollars from a bereaved father who had lost his son. Schwartz claimed to have contacted the spirit of a 25-year-old man in the bathroom of his parents' house and it is alleged he attempted to charge the family 3.5 million dollars for his mediumship service. Schwartz responded saying that the allegations were set up to destroy his science credibility."

If I did not know the person named Schwartz, and I read this paragraph in Wikipedia, I would combine this with the Wikipedia paragraphs discussed previously and distrust anything Dr. Schwartz would say. If I trusted the integrity of Wikipedia, and if I trusted Dr. Ray Hyman and Geraldo Rivera, I would conclude that Dr. Schwartz is an irresponsible and unethical scientist.

In that Paul Davids invited Dr. Schwartz to collaborate with him on the Forrest J Ackerman case, I would either infer that Paul Davids was being duped by Dr. Schwartz, or that Paul Davids was irresponsible and unethical.

Using the logic of guilt through association, if I were relying on Wikipedia and Geraldo and even Lawrence O'Donnell, I would have to conclude that the book you are reading should not be trusted. I would therefore conclude that the apparent evidence for Forry's efforts to tell his close friends, his biographers – and the entire world – that he wanted to set the record straight about life after death, was invalid.

I can't let this happen to Mr. Ackerman, a.k.a Uncle Forry. And I can't let this happen to Mr. Davids. So as I have done with Lawrence O'Donnell, let's set the record straight about the Geraldo Rivera truth abuse fiasco.

First, Wikipedia writes that I was accused of being a "fraud" in "overstepping" my position as a university researcher by "requesting over three million dollars from a bereaved father who had lost his son."

In the next sentence Wikipedia writes that I "attempted to charge the family 3.5 million dollars for his mediumship services."

Does it make sense that a senior professor at a major university would attempt to charge a family 3.5 million dollars for his mediumship services?

I know that some mediums charge high fees, allegedly more than $2,000 for a single reading. But can it be true that a university professor was charging a family 3.5 million dollars for a reading? Especially when the professor is not a medium and never claims he is a medium. So where did the 3.5 million dollar

figure come from?

Here is the truth. A wealthy bereaved father read *The Afterlife Experiments* book. He then contacted one of the mediums featured in the book and had multiple private readings with her. He was so amazed by the accuracy of the readings that he called me to share his gratitude. He asked me what he might do to help advance the research and also give it credibility.

I told the father that if he was really that wealthy, that he might consider creating an endowed named professorship in afterlife science at a major university in honor of his deceased son. I suggested that he could do so in his son's name. I explained how creating this position would not only provide the endowed professor with research funds, but it would give prestige to the work.

The father asked me how much it would cost to fund such a distinguished professorship. I told him that at a private university like Harvard or Yale it could cost 3.5 million dollars. How did I know this figure? The reason is that I personally knew someone who had recently given such an endowed chair to Harvard University in honor of his deceased father. I told the father of the deceased son that he could gift this endowment to any university he chose – for example, his son's alma mater, or universities where this research was ongoing, such as the University of Virginia or the University of Arizona.

That's where the 3.5 million dollar figure came from.

However, this was not the account that the Geraldo show aired. Wikipedia was partly correct in that the Geraldo show made numerous accusations against me.

The back story, shared here for the first time, is that the father turned out to have a shady history. In fact, I learned that the father had been in federal prison for certain offenses. Moreover, the father had wanted Dr. Schwartz (me) to go into business with him and create an international fee-for-service, for-profit business employing potentially thousands of mediums worldwide to console grieving parents and also consult with businesses.

I told him I could not endorse such a for-profit plan. I could only endorse creating a non-profit organization that would help grieving parents become aware of the emerging afterlife research and through this educational foundation connect with carefully selected, certified mediums.

This resulted in the birthing of the Forever Family Foundation by Robert and Phran Ginsberg (www.foreverfamilyfoundation.org). I proposed the name and had the privilege to serve as its first president.

The father was furious with me for taking this course of action, and he attempted to get even.

Here is not the place to share more of the malice that was instigated (and paid for) by this father. What is public record (and can be readily verified) is that the Forever Family Foundation exists, that I served as its first president, and that I did propose the name for the foundation.

Where Wikipedia got the story right is that I have responded saying that the allegations were an attempt to destroy my scientific credibility. Thanks to Geraldo and sites like Wikipedia, and thanks to the bereaved father and a few others who joined him, they have succeeded in sullying my reputation to the general public.

However, that was then, and this is now. Here is what matters right now, and for the future. What you should know is that the book you are reading, to the very best of our ability, is factually true. If we have said that something has taken place, then that something has happened. Yes, this book boggles the mind, but we cannot help this. The facts are the facts.

Given Paul's past history exploring the UFO hypothesis, and given Forry's long history in the world of science fiction, it seems appropriate for me to end my section of this book with two of my favorite moments from two of my favorite science fiction movies – *Men in Black I* and *Men in Black II*.

In *Men in Black I*, the character Agent K (played by Tommy Lee Jones) said the following to the future Agent J (played by Will Smith):

"Fifteen hundred years ago, everybody knew that the Earth was the center of the universe. Five hundred years ago, everybody knew that the Earth was flat. And fifteen minutes ago, you knew that humans were alone on this planet. Imagine what you'll know tomorrow."

I often think of this quote as a reminder for me – and by extension, all of us – to stay open to what the future may teach us.

In *Men in Black II*, the character Laura Vasquez (played by Rosario Dawson) says the following to Agent J (played by Will Smith)

"When we're kids, before we're taught how to think or what to believe, our hearts tell us there is something else out there. I know what I saw. You tell me what I'm supposed to believe."

I often remind myself of this quote when I think about my reactions to seeing things I find extremely difficult to believe really happened.

Like Laura Vasquez in that movie, I know what I saw.

For example, I know I saw that my photographs of the *Midnight in Paris* poster featuring van Gogh's "Starry Night" had selectively disappeared, and I discovered this fact two hours after having taken pictures of the poster of Paul Davids' movie, *Starry Night*, which also features van Gogh's painting "Starry

Night." Rhonda saw this too.

I know that I saw a bottle of orange juice appear in the refrigerator, that neither Rhonda nor I have any recollection of how it got there, and that I wondered whether HFJA might have had something to do with this, and then I learned all the amazing connections of Forry to orange (e.g., his cat named Mr. Orange). I know that Forrest J Ackerman's first apparent after death communication was with two Canadian filmmakers in a Hollywood hostel on Orange Drive, a stone's throw from the Magic Castle (which Forry frequently attended), which you reach by going north on Orange Drive, crossing Franklin Avenue and continuing straight on Orange to the entrance door of the Castle. Though the Magic Castle has a Franklin address, Orange Drive is what takes you to the valet parking area alongside the ornate front door. The Magic Castle even has a Houdini séance room filled with memorabilia from Houdini's career as an escape artist.

I know that I heard my hidden alarm clock go off in my chair while Paul and two of his friends were visiting with us in Tucson, that the clock had never spontaneously gone off before, and that the alarm had been amazingly set to two minutes to twelve. Although my alarm went off just before noon, if you had been in Forry's home when he took his last breath, and if at that moment you had glanced at a nearby clock, the hands on that clock would have been at two minutes to twelve.

As for the incident with my clock, five people saw it.

Also like Laura Vasquez, the question I regularly ask myself is: "what am I supposed to believe?"

And by extension: "what are you supposed to believe?"

Unlike the *Men in Black II* quote, I am not going to tell you what you are supposed to believe.

What I have done is explain to you the systematic process by which I have come to a conclusion about life beyond death. I call this FACT-based conclusion my "current understanding," based upon FACT, the Five Additive Criteria Test.

My current understanding is that the probability that our consciousness survives physical death, and that by extension, Forry's has as well, is the same probability that the light from distant stars continues long after the star has died. And just as the information of individual stars is not lost in the vastness of space, neither is our individual information lost as well.

Each of us has the privilege – the freedom – to come to our conclusions.

If (1) Paul Davids is correct, and if (2) the process I have employed to reach a responsible and justified conclusion is correct, then (3) Forry is giving all of us

a great gift.

And as far as I can tell, he seems to be having the time of his life – or should I say afterlife?

The adventure continues…

26. RETURN TO THE ACKERMANSION

The front door of the Ackermansion as it looks today. "Who's there? We bid you welcome!"

The front door of the Ackermansion in 1986. Forry, who is at the left, often greeted his guests with the words: "Who dares disturb the sleep of the vampire?"

Paul Davids again. I'm back after Dr. Gary Schwartz' chapters to say that,

like all of the unexpected phenomena described in this book, the existence of this chapter was also a surprise. Primarily it is a surprise because I never expected to be placed in close touch with Mark Rollings, the present owner of the 18-room home that is the former Ackermansion on Glendower in Los Angeles.

I did not know the extent to which unexplained phenomena had continued in the Ackermansion. At first it merely intrigued the new owner and challenged his logical mind. Sleeping in the master bedroom, which had once been the bedroom of Forry and Wendayne, he would hear footsteps at night out on the upper landing, and there was no one visibly there. He would hear reports from many renters that the house was "haunted," and that they had seen an old man pacing.

I recalled the tenants who had told me about their sensing the presence of someone unseen they had called Victor. But these other tenants were actually seeing this man, not merely sensing him. No description ever settled the question of whether he looked like Forry.

There were others who reported seeing a woman. (Wendayne had passed away in the house. Her first words to Forry, as a clerk in a bookstore, had been "May I help you?" And her last words were: "Forry, help me!") Sometimes the report would be of a woman with a boy. Wendayne's grown son by a previous marriage had lived in the house with them for a year or two. He and Forry had been like oil and water. Forry had considered him like the main character in *The Bad Seed*. Wendayne's son had no respect for the collection of science fiction, horror and fantasy memorabilia. Sean Fernald told me that once, in a fit of anger, Wendayne's son had threatened to burn down the house. Yet Wendayne had taken her son's side in many arguments, protecting him from Forry who wanted her son to be gone – or Forry was prepared to leave himself (or so he said). Was the boy who was occasionally sighted in the house Wendayne's son? Some mediums believe that if one passed away as an adult, nevertheless the spirit of the deceased can appear to others in the spirit form of a child.

Many unsettling questions plagued Mark Rollings. However, it all came to a boil one night when he slept in a downstairs bedroom (not far from where one tenant had once seen a "shadow person" moving across the wall and into a bathroom). At about three in the morning, Mark awoke to see the apparition of a woman floating in the open doorway to the bathroom near the bed. He said she had somewhat short hair, like a hairstyle of the 1950's. She was not looking directly at him, but rather she was staring somewhat above him. She did not stir. He felt panic. He turned on the light, and she was gone.

He never slept downstairs in that room again.

At some point, we were in touch with one another. He had heard about *The Life After Death Project*, though he had not seen it. He seemed unaware that two former tenants had permitted me to film interviews with them in the house. He was a close friend of George Noory, the famous radio show host of *Coast to Coast AM*. They had grown up in the same town. George Noory had spurred on Mark's interest in the paranormal, and although George knew many of the top people in the field of paranormal research, Mark decided to turn to me for assistance. He wanted to know if the specialists I had used in my film could come to the house and check it out and help get to the truth of the matter.

That's how the plans for May 26, 2015, began.

Mark set aside four days and three nights during which he would not offer the house for a short term rental. He permitted me to invite a large team of researchers to come to live there by day, sleep there by night, and carry on measurements and experiments both day and night.

I enlisted Gary Schwartz and his wife, Rhonda. They in turn reached out to the Steklis family – Gary had worked with Professor Dieter Steklis and Dieter's wife Netzin at the University of Arizona. The Steklis husband and wife team had been in charge of Diane Fossey's organization studying gorillas in Africa, depicted in the film *Gorillas in the Mist*.

They were skeptical scientists but open-minded enough to be convinced by data – if valid data was found and confirmed. They planned to bring along their two college student sons to assist with all of the scientific equipment that would be put to use while we were conducting experiments at what once was Forrest J Ackerman's house.

Author Rosemary Guiley and her husband Joe were to join us also. Rosemary was the author of books such as *The Art of Black Mirror Scrying*, *Guide to the Dark Side of the Paranormal* and *The Encyclopedia of Angels*.

Gary also extended the invitation to two psychics he respected very much: Susanne Wilson and Jamie Clarke. Dr. John Allison decided to fly in from New Jersey. Other participants would be there for certain segments of the research and some would participate in a séance. The others who came and went included Hollace Davids (my wife), Joe Moe, Sean Fernald, and Russell Maynor. One evening we were visited by Maxi Wild, a British singer who had experienced some very unusual EVP events. We wondered if her very presence might encourage more EVP.

Author Rosemary Guiley and her husband, Joe, in the home that once was the 18-room Ackermansion.

Needless to say, there was great anticipation leading up to our return to the Ackermansion. However, I took a trip to Santa Fe first. On April 23rd, 2015, I arrived at our Santa Fe vacation home where I had not been since January. When I had departed in January, everything in the house had been checked and left ready in case there was a rental – but there were no rentals during the interval leading up to my April arrival.

When I went downstairs to the recreation room, to my astonishment and surprise, a framed poster (with glass) of Forrest Ackerman's Famous Monsters Convention in 1993 was no longer on the wall behind the bar. Instead, it had been taken down and leaned against a wooden bookshelf, with two barstools pushed against it to prevent it from falling. The wall hook for this poster was still in place.

I have no recollection of having taken that poster down – I do not believe I was thinking of replacing it with other art (since as Ackerman memorabilia it was very special to me), and I was nearly certain that I would not have left it that way because then the house would not have been ready for a renter.

I went upstairs, contemplating this, somewhat in shock, and at that moment the phone rang and psychic Catherine Yunt of Tucson said: "What's happening? My spirit guides said I should call you – something just happened?"

You can see the wall hook where the poster was removed. The poster was found on the floor, leaning against a piece of furniture.

I said her timing was excellent. I told her about the poster, and she asked that I go back downstairs and read to her what it said.

It was about the convention in Crystal City twenty-three years ago, and the dates of that convention were May 28, 29 and 30.

Suddenly I gasped, realizing that May 28 and 29 (of 2015) were two of the four days we would be spending at the former Ackermansion in just a few weeks.

My emotional reaction was as if spirit friends had moved the poster as a reinforcement of Forry's "welcome" to stay at his former house.

The dates of the 1993 poster were a clear overlap to some of the dates the Davids and Schwartz team would be staying at the remodeled Ackermansion.

It felt as if this incident were a presage of things that would happen while we were there. In fact, May 28th turned out to be the night our research group held the séance at the Ackermansion.

This was another extraordinary synchronicity.

Since there was no explanation for how the poster had been removed from the wall and left in a place where I would pay special attention to it, this had every appearance of being another of those incidents that was a display of design and intent. Again, the key date numbers were a precise match, though decades apart.

One night before my departure from Santa Fe to return to Los Angeles on May 7th, before I went to sleep I put out a piece of paper (a 4 x 6 index card) and a pen on one of the two nightstands beside the bed, and I asked Forry if he would do something with the card. This was in the same room where the ink obliteration had occurred in 2009. More than six years had gone by.

While I was still awake, and again while I had been in the bathroom a brief time, I came back into the bedroom to find the 4 x 6 card now on the floor. I was astonished again. There were no air vents that could influence it. I wondered if it was possible that I had caused it to flutter to the floor without noticing it, perhaps by closing the bedroom door too hard, creating a wind that might have moved the card.

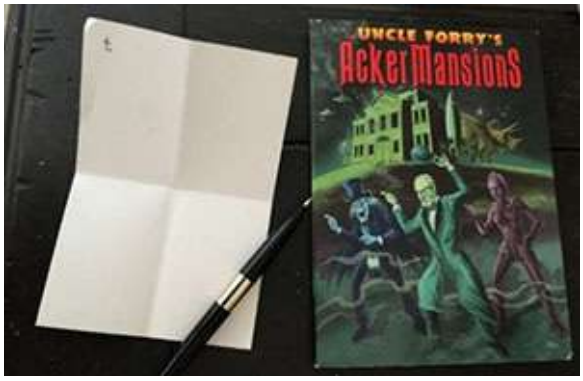
As an experiment, trying to duplicate what had just taken place, I tried slamming the door or just pushing it closed hard. I tried this again and again –

probably about 30 or 40 times. Many times the card did move from the table, but always **further** away from the door. I took a photo of the exact place to where the card had mysteriously moved, and it was **closer to the door** when it moved while I was in the bathroom.

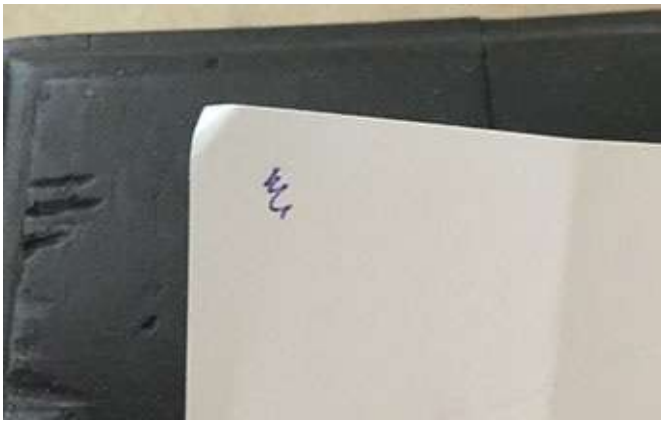
Another night (I seem to recall it was the following night), I put the 4 x 6 card on one of the two nightstands again, and I asked aloud if spirit would write something on it. I even left a pen alongside it. Nothing happened. So the following day I asked spirit if it would just do anything to the card with ink, it didn't have to be actual writing.

When I awoke in the morning, to my shock again, there was a tiny little scribble in one corner – it looked sort of like an "M" plus another tiny scribble line. I was so perplexed I took a photo and sent this to Gary and John Allison.

Of course my skeptical mind asked myself: Could that scribble have been there when I put the card down and I didn't notice it? My answer was no. I would not have asked spirit to scribble on an index card as an experiment if that card already had writing on it – I am sure I would have paid attention to that. I was observant. I would have noticed.



Paul placed the 4" x 6" index card alongside a copy of the DVD of Uncle Forry's Ackermansions, *hoping Forry would respond to that, perhaps with some writing. The little scribble in the upper left of the card was not there when Paul went to bed.*



A closeup of the tiny scribble that Paul cannot explain.

So many things happened during the few days at the Ackermansion, that I could probably write another book just about that.

This is John Allison cutting Paul off, before he writes that whole book he's threatening to write about the return to the Ackermansion.

I'll tell what I remember from my point of view.

As Paul was leaving Santa Fe to return to California, and as Hollace was flying back to California from New York, I was preparing to land in Los Angeles.

My cab ride to the empty home of the Davids family gave me time to think about what I was doing there. We decided that I would take a cab to their home and just hang out until they got back, thanks to a hidden key (don't bother, you'd never find it).

I was looking forward to seeing Paul and Hollace again, meeting Gary Schwartz, and to getting into something where I would probably be way over my head. I felt that I would probably be the only skeptic, so it would be interesting to see such a large group of people "in their element."

The Davids have a very special house in a special place. It's a very old California bungalow (about a century old) that has been fully restored and expanded. It's in a very old section of Los Angeles called Highland Park that by every appearance is like a small town of wood frame homes.

With the hills of Glendale and Mount Wilson off in the distance, you would not guess you were in a city, until you turned and glanced past the big ficus trees to look toward downtown Los Angeles seven miles away, a small and barely

visible feature of their skyline.

I was particularly happy that they had a piano, a real piano (not a digital keyboard), and I played for about an hour. I had my iPad with me with over 1000 “songs” in it, so I was flipping through, playing random songs, enjoying the feel of the real thing. I did stop at “Waltzing Matilda” and felt the urge to play it but I wasn’t familiar enough with the words, so I moved on.

Paul and Hollace finally arrived, and I got to spend some time with them. (They’re both very sweet people to be with.) I helped Paul pack some memorabilia that he wanted to take with him, and I got to talk to Hollace in her garden in the morning. We packed Paul’s backup car, a 1994 junker SUV that he had. Immediately we had to call AAA and get the battery replaced, since it had died, and that morning we went shopping for food (that the group, when they arrived, quickly consumed).

We drove in the direction of Griffith Park towards what I learned is called the Los Feliz district of Los Angeles. We wound our way up Vermont Avenue, and we soon discovered that we were the first to get there.

The house that was once the Ackermansion is truly a special place. Welcome to California. Groups, fairly big groups, often rent the place. A photoshoot with professional models was running overtime when we arrived, so we waited patiently before unloading the old car.

It’s hard not to love the house. It’s certainly not the same Ackermansion of old – no longer the place that author Ray Bradbury had described as the Fort Knox of science fiction. However, it was certainly a classic house – a Spanish style, three-story home with a great view, an almost overpowering view, of downtown Los Angeles.

Paul and I decided to share a bedroom on the lowest floor. It’s not really accurate to call it a basement, since each floor is the size of a house unto itself, stylish in every respect. Paul informed me that the lowest floor was where Forry had once had his office for so many years. It was also the floor where Mark Rollings had the apparition of the woman sort of floating in the doorway to the bathroom in the wee hours of the morning. By our sharing a room, we enabled the mediums (Susanne Wilson and Jamie Clark) to have their own rooms.

I have to admit it was a little spooky walking around a big empty house (although it was quite elegantly furnished), and while we could have probably had separate rooms, we choose to stay together. I had seen some mattresses in a closet and I was fine with throwing one on the floor and-letting Paul have the bed, at least for the first night.

I remember waking up the next morning, and to my surprise, Paul was

gone. When I finally found him I was astonished that he told me that a horrible noise had driven him out that night – apparently an unearthly noise that only he could hear, since it never woke me up. He tried to rationalize it, suggesting it was my snoring, but never in my entire life have I ever done so (unless in some trance-like fugue state)! However, I get ahead of myself. Let's go back to the day of our arrival…

Others started to arrive and cars started to assemble on the narrow winding road in the hills. The house was nicely equipped with a good security system, and we would always know if at any time a door was opened – front door, door to the garage, *etc.*

Gary and his wife, Rhonda, and the mediums often were away from the house during our days there. I believe the plan was to hold a group reading/séance/whatever and then have a different set of mediums involved at a later date to see if confirmatory information could be obtained.

The Steklis family (party of four) moved into the biggest room on the lower floor that had once served both as Forry's office and his library with so many stacks of books and shelves you could easily get lost. With the Steklis family there, it was quickly converted into a big workspace/bedroom. Rosemary Guiley and Joe chose the other bedroom in the basement, where the owner had seen an apparition of the lady in the middle of the night. (I don't think anyone told them that. They were "kept in the dark," so to speak.)

The story I heard was that not only did Mark Rollings see the apparition there, but on another occasion, a woman tenant staying in that bedroom had asked him if there was an iron and ironing board down there that she could use. Reportedly, at that very moment, there was the sound of the iron in the hall closet just outside that bedroom as it crashed to the floor of that closet. Creepy enough for you, or what?

Upstairs, on the second floor, there was a landing at the top of the steps. To one side was a hallway leading to two rooms – one for each medium. On the other side of the landing was the master bedroom, Mark's room, which he keeps as off limits when visitors are there. That used to be the bedroom of Forry and Wendayne. As it worked out, I did end up sleeping in that room, with Mark's consent, for two of the three nights we were there.

It was fun to meet everyone, and there was no shortage of interesting conversations, with fascinating people – from ape experts to a chemist (me). At one point I had happened to find myself on the lowest floor where the family was, and I had asked Dieter who was the bigger skeptic – he or I? It was an interesting conversation, and we never agreed on a ranking.

Since the Steklis family knew that Forry was a big King Kong fan(g), they brought a death mask of a silver-backed gorilla. (Wow!) I believe I was the only one to put it on.

The gorilla death mask, brought from Africa, compliments of the Steklis family.

I need to be brief here, so I will try to report on only the most important items of my memories of the event. We did all go to the Magic Castle for dinner, which was great fun. I especially enjoyed talking to Rhonda Schwartz over dinner about how she learned to be a medium.

The Magic Castle, also known as the Rollin B. Lane mansion, did at least have one ghost, Irma. She is invisible but loves to play the Lane family piano, for a small fee. I patiently waited for her, planning to request that she play "Waltzing Matilda" for me, but she appeared to have taken the day off (disappeared for the day). I still at that point hadn't really appreciated the importance of the song.

Again, while the outsider of the group, I felt accepted by them all – truly a sincere and warm group of people. It was like total immersion into another life – not just a separate vocabulary and a different area of expertise. I'm sure it would feel strange for an ape person to have to party with chemists, but it was more than just that. This was a new way of thinking, of living your life. As an introvert, I'm pretty good at sitting back and watching, and I did.

Susanne Wilson, one of the mediums, seemed to have a difficult time in the

evenings. In the morning after the first night she reported to us all that men barged into her bedroom, repeatedly, creeping her out “to the max.” The first time it happened, someone she saw only in silhouette opened her door at about two-thirty in the morning. Unfortunately, there was no lock on her bedroom door. The first time she assumed it might have been a wayward member of a filming crew that had been around during the evening. The filming crew of Ron James had come to gather in what used to be Forry and Wendayne’s bedroom, and for an hour, Paul and Maxi Wild sat in the silence of that room while recordings and videos were made. The object was to determine if there would be EVP or some other anomalies on those recordings.

What Susanne didn’t know was that every member of the film crew had departed at the same time as Ron James, around half an hour past midnight. Not ten minutes later, someone barged into Susanne’s room again. Once again, with the hall light still on, she only saw this person silhouetted and could not make out any features. She called out: “What do you want, I’m trying to sleep!” The person receded and closed the door. The inexplicable thing was that everyone in the house – which was everyone who had come to be part of our project – was asleep by then. (We all compared notes in the morning, and none of us wandered into her room).

The most disturbing part of the experience – the climax, you could say, was when the door was flung open and the intruder this time slowly shined what might have been a red laser pointer across the room – or perhaps something more like a red laser gun-mounted sight – stopping for a moment while it was right in Susanne’s eyes. It was as though someone were eager for her to depart, even if it was in the middle of the night. And she almost did. She texted Gary Schwartz, who by his own choice was staying at a nearby hotel, telling him she needed her sleep and didn’t know who kept coming into her room, but she couldn’t work under those conditions.

She changed her mind in the morning and decided to stay, after she felt the “presence” of a kindly woman coming beside her as she sat on the bed in early daylight. She heard the woman speaking to her, with an accent, saying that those who disturbed her were “imbeciles” and would not bother her again.

Most interestingly, later we learned from Joe Moe that “imbecile” was a word the late Wendayne Ackerman had frequently used, and Joe told me that Wendayne spoke with a German accent. The plot thickened.

Here's an image of what it looks like when a SWAT team interrupts your sleep with red lasers. It was no SWAT team that intruded on Susanne Wilson, but she agreed that the shock of the experience felt like something of that nature.

In fact, the mystery intensified when the next morning Rosemary Guiley could not find her red laser pointer. It distressed her, because she knew where she had put it in a pocket of her satchel, and it was not there, and she was definitely going to need it in a few days when she would be lecturing at a conference out at the California desert town of Joshua Tree.

It was probably two weeks before Rosemary found the laser pointer. Somehow it had ended up in a pocket of her satchel she never used. She insisted she never kept it there and would not have put it there. And how would anyone even have known that she had a red laser pointer? Also, Susanne's description of what was pointed at her more resembled a red laser gun-mounted site than a laser pointer used for lectures.

The night after the intrusions into Susanne's room, we had cameras and recording equipment set up in the hallway leading to that room. This time she reported that her bed started to shake several times. She said it vibrated so strongly she wondered if there was an earthquake.

I checked to see if any seismic activity had been reported that night and there had been – but this is southern California, there are several an hour, almost always below our limits of detection without sensitive measuring equipment.

Susanne was clearly surprised/upset, possibly because most of her readings

do not require total physical immersion like this.

Weeks later Paul had digitized and checked footage from his video camera in the hallways outside Susanne's room that night. There was nothing on the tape visually, however there was an unexplained, recurring swishing sound. Oddly, a similar swishing sound was reported by the two Steklis sons – a sound that showed up in the recordings they made in the master bedroom. The sound kept recurring each time Paul had begun speaking about Forry – in fact, in a playful mood, he was sort of channeling Forry while Ron James was filming and when Maxi Wild was there. He was cracking one pun after another, and on the recording during those moments there was the swishing and wooshing and hissing – which stopped when Paul stopped. We have not gotten to the bottom of any of this data yet.

Not only was there the hijinx of the vibrating bed in Susanne's room, but Jamie Clark reported that in the morning, a chair had definitely been moved on the second floor patio outside his bedroom. He had made note of where the chair was when he went to bed. It was neatly arranged tucked under a patio table. When he awoke it was pushed several feet away and at an angle. There was no access to that patio from outside (without a very long ladder), and Jamie knew of nobody entering his room that night to gain access to the patio door. He "sensed" that Forry was behind it.

As I said, for two nights I slept in the master bedroom upstairs (which had been Forry and Wendayne's bedroom). It was now Mark's bedroom, and I kept the doors open to the second floor landing. Mark had reported the occasional sounds of very clear footsteps – pacing out there on the landing – when there was no one physically present. Sleeping up there was in part a protective gesture toward Susanne. If anything else happened to her during the middle of the night, at least she knew I was just one landing and one hallway away.

While it appeared that these incidents, with the intruders and with the bed vibrations, were very different experiences for Susanne than the normal paranormal fare she frequently experienced and reported, she never looked for any of us during the middle of the night to tell us what was happening either while it was happening or soon afterwards.

I thought that was puzzling.

View from the master bedroom landing at the top of the upper stairs, showing the end of the hallway leading to Susanne Wilson's bedroom. The video and audio equipment was set up in anticipation of night-time activities.

Let's jump to the evening of the séance, from my point of view. We had cameras rolling, equipment hooked up to computers, and everywhere pictures and stuff ("trinkets"). The mediums and Gary at first discouraged Paul from spreading the "trinkets" around, because they saw no reason that these items would convince spirits to participate. Actually, these items were more than trinkets. Paul described thm as "treasures" of memorabilia that all had sentimental importance to Forry. Paul had acquired many of these items at the Ackerman estate sale in May, 2009, and he refused to be discouraged. I must say that even for those who didn't know Forry, like me, once the room had been decorated with Paul's collection, it was clearly an act of love and everyone could feel it.

Shortly before the séance began, Joe Moe arrived; I swear it was like seeing an old friend, even though we'd never met. For Joe, it was his first time back inside the house since he had helped Forry move from there to the smaller house (what they called the Acker-mini-mansion) about six years before Forry passed away. Joe had never seen how the interior had been remodeled. In spite of the remodeling, he agreed that the big house still retained its character and much of the original layout, and it was easy to look around and recall how it had been when it was once the "Fort Knox of Science Fiction."

Finally, in the living room, we sat. Three sofas in a U-shape were populated. The two mediums were seated opposite each other. Dieter Steklis sat on the sofa with Jamie, so the two mediums could face each other. I was fortunate to sit next to Susanne Wilson, which is where I really wanted to sit.

Paul was filming from one end, directly behind Susanne's head, and one of the Steklis boys was filming from the other side of the room, capturing Susanne's facial expressions.

It might be of significance to mention that there was no decision to hold the séance in the living room on the main floor until almost the last moment. Up until then, the plan had been to hold it on the lowest floor in the large room that had been Forry's office.

Well, let's begin!

There were a few initial comments from Gary.

"We're here to honor Forry, we invite him and his friends to participate." Paul said some opening words too, speaking to Forry as though he were present, telling Forry and Wendayne that some of the happiest moments in his life were the times he had visited them in this house. Suddenly I realized, this was really happening. I actually felt at times like all of this had to be a show, all put on just for me. Everyone would have had to have been in on it but me, although I saw no winks exchanged. It was the skeptic in me pushing back as I sunk into the warmth of the opening moments of the séance.

The Forry/Harry Houdini team arrived, acknowledged by both mediums as being present in the room. Harry and another Harry and Forry and probably his wife, Wendayne were all there. Houdini! Really? Were JFK and Jesus and Lincoln there too? (Sorry, just a *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure* flashback.)

Of course, as I learned more, it was brought to my attention that a chair President Lincoln had sat in had graced that living room when Forry lived there. His maternal great grandfather had been a photographer and had taken an official portrait of Lincoln in that chair.

As far as the "other Harry" who showed up, according to Susanne, his name had "Ray" as part of it so it wasn't much of a leap to conclude she was referring to the movie magic pioneer Ray Harryhausen, a good friend of Forry.

Susanne started to tell us who was there, and where each "was" in the room. Of course, I saw nothing. But she seemed to be in communication with a group of spirits, and she was writing on her pad as fast as her fingers would move. It was as though it was all flooding into her mind and her writing could scarcely keep up with it, and she just had to get it all down, at least in shorthand notes, or she might forget it.

At one point, Susanne mentioned that Howard was there. That didn't ring a bell for anyone. She said Howard was a "frenemy" of Forry. Still no gongs went off in our minds. Then she said his last name began with an "L." Instantly Joe Moe shouted out: "H. P. Lovecraft!"

The meaningful details were filled in for me later. The famous horror writer, H. P. Lovecraft, had become an enemy of Forry early in Forry's career, because Forry had written scathing reviews of some of his stories. Eventually the two men had become the best of friends.

These names and clues meant nothing to Susanne. Gary had insisted she remain "in the dark" from the day he brought her aboard the project to the night of this séance. She stated forcefully that she had never researched anything about Forry and his friends on the Internet. She swore to us that was a fact. In her role as a psychic medium, it would have been a violation of trust and honor ever to invoke any kind of deception.

Along came another name, an important one. What was it? Nicolai? No, no, it's Nicola. Nicola Tesla? At this point I'm expecting Einstein and Columbus. When I was told that Tesla was there, I was forced to try to actually accept it. I couldn't. Tesla! He has been discussed as a genius and as being crazy. Tesla has written scientific descriptions of invention ideas that few could understand. On the other hand, his invention of AC electricity changed life as we know it. Also there are so many stories out there which may or may not be true, like how his earthquake machine almost knocked down a building in New York. I wanted to spend time with him, ask him about it all! What I gleaned from Susanne was that she sensed roughly a dozen spirits on each side of her, with Susanne carrying the burden of trying to report what all from the Other Side were saying.

These are things that I learned from them (the "spirits" that Susanne was communicating with) that night, items that answered lots of questions for me about life in the afterlife. They are:

1. Yes it WAS quite a surprise to Forry, as an atheist, to die and realize he still exists. While one understands that one's opinions of the afterlife were wrong, one does not complain.

2. Somehow, Forry got together with some friends and eventually put together a group of creative and competent spirits. Why? Well, they did it because they could, because friends are always good, and it's no fun to party alone (more to come on these two items). Also, we in our physical bodies – we bags-of-mostly-water – are not the only ones who can do research we were told. (more on this later on).

3. Someone had asked about the spooks, the dark spirits that seem to stop by occasionally – specifically the ones that harassed Susanne. Were those events all due to Forry and friends? To answer this a few facts from them will help. Where are the spirits of Forry and friends? Well, they're here! Essentially they are occupying the same space as we do, sometimes they fade in and out of their

view, just like sometimes we see them. “We party here sometimes,” Forry explained, “right here in this house.”

They further explained that, if you were a spirit in the area, and surveyed the Hollywood Hills, this house would be a bright structure – like a lighthouse. Such places can attract a less loving crowd, like the ones who intruded on Susanne with what seemed like red laser gun-mounted sights in the middle of the night. They were not the good guys; they were the others, other spirits with other agendas, who occasionally stop by for some minor mayhem.

So sometimes they get together to enjoy each other’s company, other times to try to define the biggest needs of their society (the Afterlife). They also do research, but on what? What big project are they working on? Well, one must expend much energy to communicate with us, or to try to make their presence known, although the interest in communicating with us is substantial. So, they on the other side are actively doing research, looking for ways to make communication between us and them easier and more efficient. I thought this was very exciting news!

They also threw in a few comments about us. I was generously given an A+ for my efforts. I’ll take it and thank Forry for the kind words. Forry had special things to say to his good friend, Paul. He said that Paul could easily develop the ability to talk to Forry. Paul could ask questions, and he would feel certain feelings that would be Forry’s response. That’s a pretty incredible offer!

They were also clear that Paul had work yet to do, work that he had to do – four projects. Perhaps writing this book was one, perhaps the upcoming story of Marilyn Monroe’s death was another (Paul did show us his new documentary on the topic, called *Marilyn Monroe Declassified*. It has not been released yet as I write this but it will be released by mid-2016, and it does have a website: www.marilyndeclassified.com).

Jamie clearly saw Marilyn there when Paul showed the movie to us and indicated that he “got it right.” I thought it was his very best work. It focused more on who was involved in her murder (not suicide) than on a key piece of the story. Apparently, in the intimate moments of MM’s times with the Kennedy boys, they would often try to impress her with little known facts that only top US administrators would know. When she was disposed of for becoming a problem, she was preparing to have a press conference about her two affairs, creating extreme problems for JFK and RFK, problems not only for their country but with their families. Also, to prove their intimacy by explaining some of the secrets that she now knew. One was that Roswell was real, aliens and UFOs were absolutely real – known by the government. I think this story should be

told once and for all, and who better to tell it than Paul, through Marilyn. I think Paul also will serve as the catalyst for efforts to communicate with the afterlife – Gary's greatest cheerleader!

I must say that, as the overseer of the séance, Susanne did an amazing job. I watched her. She started making notes on a legal pad (the process must be captured on film sometime). She was trying to keep track of a dozen people talking at once, who they were, how they all felt and fit together. She'd write words or phases on different parts of the page, sometimes with lines going from item to item, to remind her the order in which they must be reported as she quickly talked, reporting before points escaped her memory. She wrote and wrote, using her shorthand to report to us as much as she could. Page after page – I watched her pen as I heard her words. She worked hard for us on both sides. At the end, they were becoming tired and started to/had to leave. As the seance ended, I felt like we were in church and had just heard the sermon of our lives. It was over, but we were all, for awhile, quiet. No spoken words except "thank you" and "good night" seemed appropriate.

I almost forgot one very important thing. Again there were three sofas in the room, arranged in a "U" shape. Susanne and I were next to each other on one, Jamie and Dieter Steklis (the other skeptic in the room) were on another. During the séance Dieter interrupted. He/his seat had started to vibrate. It was similar to what Susanne had experienced the night before. It was no California tremor. It was localized to one sofa. It continued. He felt it. Jamie felt it. Dieter's son who was sitting behind the sofa, filming, touched the sofa and confirmed that it was vibrating. It intensified as it vibrated.

The vibrating began at a part of the séance when Susanne was bringing through Montague Keen, who was a British researcher of life after death. Gary had known Montague Keen, and it was a very compelling moment for him. Paul told me later that he noticed the computer bar graph (that was attached to sensors that had been set up in the room) started to go "off the charts" as Susanne talked about Montague checking in with us. Susanne described these couch vibrations as a clear, physical sign being provided to us from the Other Side.

After it was all over, Paul and I, alone in the living room, checked out the sofa for anything unusual. Nothing. Just furniture. No vibrating sex toys left behind by a former visitor, stuffed into a pillow, with batteries operating. It was just a couch. Paul even slept on it that night, right there in that living room. He wanted to know if the phenomenon would begin again. However, the fireworks were over. It was, however, captured on videotape.

One other thing I just remembered, someone from the Other Side

mentioned “Waltzing Matilda.” Others had to explain to me that it was Forry’s wife’s real name. Matilda! (Actually Mathilde…German.)

Susanne had insisted that Matilda was there that night. In fact, in the world of spirit, she saw her as apparently carrying a fruit bowl. Joe Moe explained that was something she always did. Visitors to the Ackermansion had always triggered her fruit bowl organizing impulses.

Yes, in a way, we had all experienced “Mathilde’s” waltzing that night – Mathilde as the hostess, Mathilde as the one who assured Susanne that the “imbeciles” would not return.

And to think that my arrival in Los Angeles had begun with my sitting down at Paul and Hollace’s piano, as I had seriously contemplated playing “Waltzing Matilda,” without any understanding of why!

It is without doubt a very strange universe in which we live. And much knowledge and many answers remain concealed from us still.

I had a lot of time to think about what I saw and heard on the plane trip home. I won’t go into it here, about how and why it happened, but I permitted myself the freedom to allow for the possibility of an afterlife, and it’s not hard to believe at all. I believe.

I believe.

That Monday evening, when I had returned home, no iPhone fell off my mantel. That evening, it was my iPad!

I know I must feel now like the aunt who comes to visit and never leaves, but I must close with this. Monday, I returned to my office at The College of New Jersey. Waiting for me as always was my office assistant, whom I call Norm. You may remember him as the African ceremonial mask that Paul had in his Santa Fe house. Paul had come to be very uncomfortable with Norm in the house since detecting an intense electromagnetic field around him the day after the inkblot obliteration occurred in March of 2009.

Since Paul was uncomfortable with keeping Norm (my name for the mask, not Paul’s) in his Santa Fe home after the psychic named Molly returned it to him, I suggested that Paul let me watch over Norm for awhile. One day a crate was delivered. I wasn’t permitted to keep him in the living room, so I took him into work, and I set him up prominently on a separate desk. He became Norm, Invisible Norm. Why invisible? Well, you have to appreciate that Norm is a big ceremonial mask in a big plexiglass case. When he first arrived, my secretary walked in and I said “Let me introduce you to Norm.” She looked around the room. “Who?” she asked. “My new office mate,” I replied. She noticed nothing new. “Did you get a pet or something she asked?” It was strange. He was

invisible to her until I pointed him out, and she was only a few feet away.

The mask from Zimbabwe in his new home in Dr. John Allison's office at The College of New Jersey.

The mask from Zimbabwe, removed from its plastic display case and under study in Dr. Allison's college laboratory.

Similar to Gary's general threat that he discusses early in the book, I started out my relationship with Norm by explaining that, if he ever gave me any trouble, I would chop him up and set him on fire. He's been fine with me. I've since learned much about this ceremonial mask (which contains no metal, by the way, so the EMF detected around it by Paul remains a puzzle). When these types of masks were used as ceremonial masks, the ceremony usually involved a three month coming-of-age process for young males, and at the end of the process, the

masks and the boys were returned to their village, and the masks were burned/destroyed. So my threat was probably particularly meaningful to him. And it is also meaningful, and curious, that Norm was never destroyed. Oh yes, he survived his ceremonial dance after Paul's friend Todd Mills purchased him in Zimbabwe. And then – every slide Todd had ever taken of Norm vanished from the box where he kept those slides in his home. Hmmmm.

As my students and I researched Norm, learned more about him, and appreciated the fact that he was a "dying species", we decided that it would be important academically to document exactly how such masks were constructed. What materials were used, what colorants were used? Some of that work would have required that we take very small samples off of him for analysis, which I was not prepared to do, since he's just visiting. So I started to look for a brother for Norm, another similar mask that I would own and could sample as needed. I found out that they were indeed rare – not expensive, just hard to find. When I first started searching, I could find only one, at an antique store somewhere in the south. I could purchase him on-line, but they did not offer shipping, so I would have had to go get him. I would, every other week, look again to see if one was for sale. I did see another similar mask appear on the market, but it too was gone before I could decide what I wanted to do. The interesting thing about this mask, Norm's potential brother, was available from an individual in Southern California. As far as I could determine, he could have been within twenty miles of Paul Davids' home! As far as ceremonial masks are concerned, it's a small world indeed!

This is what it is like to have Paul Davids in your life. It's certainly different than having a Forry, but I'm fortunate to be able to call him my friend.

A FINAL NOTE FROM DR. JOHN ALLISON

It is January 18, 2016, a day before Paul's final submission of the manuscript of this book for publication, and I've just lived through a literal overview of it all. First, a poster on my office wall with my picture on it, which had looked great since I received it in 1982, essentially faded and started to decompose overnight, a few days ago. Glossy paper printed with a good pigmented ink is now a mess – the ink faded and cracked and the paper now has a powdery coating. It is hard evidence that I can study further, like the

obliteration. As the picture on the poster fades, I'm beginning to see numbers in the black background. Intriguing. Also, a few days ago I spent frustrated in my office listening to workers outside, grinding loudly on something (preparing to add a wing to the building) until I couldn't stand it. I went outside, but no one was there. Back in my office I could still hear them. I finally found out that it was a fan in the HVAC system over my office, loudly grinding away – a first for me. Yet another fan that just wanted attention – I knocked on the ceiling and it stopped. This morning, sitting on my sofa, a *very* loud noise/vibration occurred. I could find no cause in/around the house. Nothing fell; no limb dropped off a tree. Surprisingly, nothing fell off a shelf or the wall. The neighbors felt nothing. It reminded me of the vibrating Ackermansion couch. Before I left home, my Furby fell off a shelf onto the floor in front of me. When I got to the office there was a pile of papers that had moved from my desk onto the floor, not unlike what occurred during Paul's visit to my home and lab to investigate the obliteration. My computer, sleeping on my desk, decided to eject a CD that was in it. It did that a total of four times this morning. While standing in my office next to some (cheaply) framed items on the wall, one of the frames fell apart (for the first time) – the same kind of frame that Paul once reported falling apart at his house (see p. 294). As I close, I learned that a good friend, Bob Klinger, just passed away. He was a sweet man. Death – it's where some stories begin.

27. ADDENDUM - LIST OF PHENOMENA

We discussed quite a large a number of unusual occurences, phenomena and synchronicities in this book related to Forrest J Ackerman, starting with the mysterious ink obliteration, the CAPTCHA Code “Ackerman 000” appearing on Michael MacDonald’s computer screen, etc., through the vibrating couch at the séance in the Ackermansion. The following list (with chapter references) is included as a research guide for readers who may wish to categorize or itemize these occurences that continue to challenge our understanding of what we have been experiencing.

The list is in approximately the order in which the anomalous phenomena are discussed in the book. Occasionally, there are a few instances of phenomena that did not happen to the authors, but which happened to some people who are mentioned. That list includes Harry Houdini, Dr. Michael Shermer (Executive Director of the Skeptics Society and Publisher of *Skeptic* magazine) and incidents regarding Paul Davids’ late father-in-law and his late mother.

1. The Inkblot obliteration on Paul Davids’ document that occurred March 18, 2009. (Chapters 2, 4-6, 8-12, 16, 23)

2. Harry Houdini’s report of the magician’s moth that died during a performance, and the live moth that appeared to take its place. (Archival incident) (Chapter 2)

3. The CAPTCHA Code “Ackerman 000” appearing on Michael MacDonald’s computer screen after he rapped on Forry Ackerman’s crypt. (Chapter 2, 7)

4. Ian Paul Johnston’s computer blurting out “Oh my God, no way!” from an animated emoticon, though the computer was “asleep.” (Chapter 2, 4, 15-16, 23

5. Joe Moe's apparition (or super-realistic dream) of Forry Ackerman appearing in his room to speak to him and thank him for the wonderful tribute. (Chapter 2)

6. The envelope Paul Davids received from Forry Ackerman when Paul was a teenager – an envelope with stamps of Santa Fe and Edgar Allan Poe, both of which became significant as a convergence in time and space about 45 years later. (Chapters 6, 9, 11)

7. Forry signing an autograph "HOO-RAY FOR HARRYHAUSEN," using Ray Harryhausen's first name as a "word within a word" play on words. This became very significant in relation to the ink obliteration's "name within a word" message. (Chapters 2, 6)

8. L. J. Dopp's portrait of Forry Ackerman, painted four years before Forry died. The painting had a clock that accurately predicted the exact time of Forry's death. (Chapters 3-4, 6, 8, 15, 16)

9. Forry Ackerman's "Dracula" ring from Bela Lugosi, which traveled 4,000 miles from Los Angeles to Halifax, practically next door to Michael MacDonald who had rapped on Forry's crypt. (Chapters 4, 16)

10. At the Ackerman estate auction, $2,500 bought Paul Davids all the items he had preselected to bid on, and he had a budget (that had been discussed with his wife) of $2,500. (Chapter 4)

11. Paul Davids and Joe Moe agreed to meet in a few weeks at Forry's crypt. Each independently changed his mind about when to go, without telling the other, and each headed there at the same time and met up there unexpectedly. (Chapter 4)

12. Paul Davids put a letter written on Yellow Hat Productions' stationery on the dining room table. He glanced again and saw it was not the printed letter, it was a blank sheet. He went to print the letter again, and when he came back, the original printed letter was in fact on the table where it was supposed to be. (Chapter 4)

13. In Dr. Siegel's lab, while researching the inkblot obliterations, he witnessed a computer that had been asleep turn itself on and turn on a program that specifically had been shut down. (Chapter 4)

14. A clock that had not ticked or chimed in years both ticked and chimed in the background as Dr. Allison was filmed at his house. He had not wound it up, nor had anyone else. (Chapters 5, 11, 16)

15. Dr. Allison's papers that he had placed on a chair, held down by a briefcase, were strewn across the dining room when he returned to the room. There was no source of breeze to move the papers and no one present who could have caused it. (Chapters 5-6, 9)

16. A fire alarm went off in Dr. Allison's lab while he was doing chemical research on the inkblot obliteration. There had been no fire alarms in about six months. (Chapter 5)

17. In the remodeled Ackermansion, tenant Suzanne Rick's music papers were strewn around on several occasions while she was briefly out of the room. This was similar to what happened to Dr. Allison's papers. (Chapter 6)

18. Another tenant of the remodeled Ackermansion saw a "shadow person" move across two walls in the house at about 3 a.m. It went into a bathroom and disappeared. (Chapter 6)

19. The heavy-duty strap of Paul Davids' camera bag came unfastened by itself while in the back of his old car. The strap has to be unfastened deliberately and takes effort, but there was no one there who did that. (Chapter 4)

20. Dr. Allison's cell phone moved by itself on several occasions while it was not ringing and was not on vibrate. Twice it moved and fell from a mantel and once from a coffee table. One another occasion, he was able to film it moving by itself in a bathroom, as it moved along the dry edge of a bathtub. (Chapter 5)

21. While Dr. Allison's band was performing the song "Lodi" at a fishing club, his cell phone and the cell phones of all his band members received a police alert that a child was thought to have been abducted in the town of Lodi. (Chapters 4-5)

22. Dr. Allison worked on the chemical mystery presented by the ink obliteration for three years and could not solve it, unable to duplicate it. He is a world class expert on inks, paints and solvents. (Chapter 5)

23. While working at his laser desorption mass spectrometer, Dr. Allison twice experienced the drawer of the desk he was sitting at try to push itself open. This was witnessed. (Chapter 5)

24. At the same time as the drawer opening by itself, the compressor on the mass spectrometer next to it came on. The compressor is designed for this not to happen by itself. It takes a several step procedure to turn it on. (Chapter 5)

25. A stuffed animal Furby designed to talk had been left sitting in one place for five years without the batteries being replaced said "Four-EEEE" (Forry) twice. (Chapter 5)

26. Reportedly a portrait of Jon Hall (the actor of *Ramar of the Jungle* who used to live in the Ackermansion) fell off a wall in the house the day he died. (Chapters 6, 16)

27. In *Fate* magazine, an article written by Paul Davids called "The Strange Case of Forrest J Ackerman" is published with an apparent mistake that was never in the manuscript or the proofread galley proofs of the magazine. The specificity of the "mistake" gives the impression that it was not actually an error or mistake at all, but was intentional to reiterate the ink obliteration message. (Chapters 6, 8, 16)

28. Forry's autograph for Paul Davids in *Famous Monster*s magazine was written directly above the words: "The Invisible Ink Men Strike Again!" This synchronicity took on apparent, profound meaning after Forry died and after the ink obliteration incident occurred. (Chapters 6, 8, 11, 16)

29. The incident in which Joe Moe insisted that his friend Sean Fernald get dressed and drive to a party to meet a German stewardess named Silke. How did Joe just intuitively "know" that it was of urgent importance the two meet, when Joe had himself only met Silke that night? (Chapter 7)

30. The first night Sean Fernald spent working with at Big Bear Lake with Paul Davids editing *The Life After Death Project*, Sean received an email from Facebook telling him Mike MacDonald (the Canadian who rapped on Forry's crypt) had sent him a message. But there was no message. Mike had not contacted him. (Chapter 7).

31. Hollace brought a bottle of Las Rocas de San Alejandro 2004 vintage

wine for Sean and Paul at Big Bear Lake. Sean recognized immediately that this was the same wine he had served at his wedding which was in 2004. Both Forrest J Ackerman and Joe Moe had attended Sean's wedding. (Chapters 7, 16, 23)

32. Sean asked Forry for a sign to show that Forry's spirit was actually communicating. He asked to be bitten by a spider. In the morning Sean saw a daddy longlegs spider in the downstairs bathroom sink bowl. The spider stayed there without moving for hours. (Chapters 7, 16, 19, 23)

33. About two days later, Sean found that he had two spider bites on his arm. He had not had a spider bite in over a decade. (Chapter 7)

34. Before departing to see Gary Schwartz in Tucson, Paul Davids woke up with two severe spider bites on his hip. There were welts. (Chapter 7)

35. When Paul arrived in Tucson, Gary Schwartz confirmed that he also had a spider bite. (Chapter 7)

36. TV personality Ben Hammond (host of Syfy channel's *Fact or Fake?)* visited Paul Davids at the Davids home and Paul observed a spider crawl along the couch and remain motionless right alongside Ben Hammond. (Chapter 7)

37. Paul Davids located a very old fictional story written by Forrest J Ackerman ("Letter to an Angel") in which Forry wrote about the spirit of deceased horror actor Lon Chaney (who starred in *The Phantom of the Opera* and also the *Hunchback of Notre Dame*) came back to life inside the body of a daddy longlegs. (Chapters 3, 7)

38. Paul Williams took a photo that appeared to show a spirit just above the body of his deceased mother. (Chapter 7)

39. The Academy for Spiritual and Consciousness Studies (ASCS) and attended the 2014 conference in Scottsdale. ASCS mistakenly mailed Paul Williams' newsletter to Paul Davids. (Chapter 7)

40. The day Sean Fernald intended to drive to Paul Davids' house to pick up his copy of the newly completed *Life After Death Project* DVD, while searching through his files on *Vampirella* he stumbled across a postcard signed by Forrest J Ackerman to Paul (it did not say Paul Davids). The postcard said

“Warmest Wishes Winner Paul, Forry (Chapter 7)

41. Jack Kelleher intended to drop out of auction bidding for a Bela Lugosi bowtie being sold by Forrest J Ackerman, but through an error his representative kept bidding and Jack won that bidding. (Chapter 8)

42. Jack Kelleher wrote an article for *Monster Memories* magazine. After he finished typing, an exclamation point that he did not write appeared at the end of the article a few lines down from Jack’s last sentence. (Chapter 8)

43. Forry signed an autograph for Jack and the ink of Forry’s name faded after a few years, but the greeting with the autograph did not fade. (Chapter 8)

44. Jack Kelleher wrote a funny blog about Moe of the Three Stooges (Curly, Larry and Moe) not aware of the Joe Moe connection. (Chapter 8)

45. Every single email in Jack Kelleher’s AOL email in-box vanished except for one – an email saying Paul Davids wanted to be friends on Facebook. Later all the emails reappeared, but it happened again exactly as before. (Chapter 8)

46. Jack and a skeptical friend got into an argument about Jack’s collection of Fedora hats. In a Googled search related to Fedora hats was a feature about Forrest J Ackerman in an online group called “The Fedora Lounge.” (Chapter 8)

47. Jack showed his skeptical friend *The Life After Death Project* and his friend insisted they turn it off about 15 minutes before it was over so they would not be late getting the a movie theater to see *Iron Man 3*. When they got to the theater, the movie showing was delayed 15 minutes. (Chapter 8)

48. Jack turned on a TV and sees a game show where the contestants had the names Ackerman and Bradbury. (Forrest J Ackerman and Ray Bradbury were the closest of friends.) Later he turned on *Jeopardy* and the contestant was named Forrest. (Chapter 8)

49. Jack’s pen ran out of ink just as he finished writing his chapter for *An Atheist in Heaven*. (Chapter 8)

50. Paul has the experience of a Native American gourd bowl that was on

a coffee table showing up in an unexpected place in his Santa Fe house. The same happens with a second gourd bowl. (Chapters 4, 9)

51. A strong electromagnetic field is measured at the mask from Zimbabwe which is on display in the living room of the Santa Fe house, right outside the door to the bedroom where the ink obliteration occurred. (Chapter 9)

52. A strong electromagnetic field is measured when the sensor is pointed at Paul Davids' brain as he stood near the mask from Zimbabwe. This was filmed as it happened. (Chapter 9)

53. While the electromagnetic field was measured at Paul's brain, as the sensor was lowered there was an electronic voice phenomena (EVP) on the videotape. A deep voice saying the single word "Lenore" can be clearly heard. (Chapters 4, 6, 11, 13, 15)

54. Soon after the Lenore EVP was heard, Paul inexplicably began months of writing massive amounts of poetry, feeling inspired by Edgar Allan Poe. (Chapters 4, 6, 11, 13, 15)

55. Molly, the Santa Fe psychic, on the day she first met Paul, predicted that he would win an award soon and that someone deceased named George (a jolly fellow with a twinkle in his eye) was going to help Paul win the award. It happened soon thereafter. (Chapters 9, 12)

56. Molly became "custodian" of the mask from Zimbabwe after it frightened Paul with its anomalous electromagnetic field readings in his house. She reported many instances of unusual activity while she had the mask. (Chapters 9, 12, 26)

57. All museums declined the gift of the mask from Zimbabwe, even ones that had unusual masks. Molly reported that the rejections often came with an explanation that the museums had experience with "haunted activity" related to masks of unusual origin and they were not interested. (Chapter 9)

58. Todd Mills' sisters dream of invisible ink. (Chapter 9)

59. Todd Mills' missing slides from Zimbabwe. (Chapters 9, 11, 14, 16, 19, 23, 26)

60. In the Los Angeles home of Paul and Hollace Davids, a bead huichol mask from Mexico popped off the wall and went up over a lampshade and landed at Paul's feet in front of a group of witnesses. This happened right after Paul's punchline to an off-color joke. (Chapters 9, 11, 15-16)

61. On the very day that Paul learned that *The Life After Death Project* was going to be broadcast on Syfy Channel, a plastic mask of Forry's face that Paul had obtained at the Ackerman estate auction inexplicably moved about ten feet across the room. (Chapter 4, 17)

62. While Paul was out for that lunch, a car swerved in front of him with the license plate "AM LOVES FM." There was a heart for "loves." The AM in the license plate is reminiscent of "Ackerman" or Acker-Monster as he was sometimes called. Thus, Paul saw the similarity to the concept "Ackerman Loves *Famous Monsters*." The timing of this was especially bizarre, happening during the same hour the face mask of Forry moved without explanation. (Chapters 9, 15)

63. Just after discovering that the face mask of Forry had moved, Paul watched while the computer shut itself off. When Paul booted it up again, each of the two screens had an open folder relevant to Forry Ackerman. (Chapters 9, 15)

64. While directing a scene for *Before We Say Goodbye* with actors in a private home, Paul and the actors and other onlookers observed that the jeans Paul was wearing were beginning to dissolve. (Chapters 10, 11)

65. An unopened, new display easel went missing in its original box in the Davids' Santa Fe vacation home. It later reappeared in a place that had been searched. (Chapters 11, 14, 16, 18)

66. Clairvoyant Karl Langspecht showed Paul a hawk feather that he claimed appeared as an apport. (Chapter 11)

67. Karl Langspecht told Paul that after Karl's mother died, he had been hoping for a sign from her. One day while in a bookstore, a book popped off a shelf beside him. The book was called *Hello from Heaven*. (Chapter 16)

68. On a trip to Santa Fe, three new pairs of trousers Paul was sure he had packed for the trip were missing the morning after his arrival. (Chapters 11, 14)

69. Paul Davids, Russell Maynor and Kerry O'Quinn are led up the road to Forry's grave by a white van with a license plate 4EFX084, of high significance connected to Forry. (Chapter 13)

70. At a key moment, a car pulled in front of the Davids' car and paced them with a license plate that began 4EFX (reminiscent of Forry…special visual effects) followed a moment later by a car with a license plate of MO61. (Joe Moe was born in 1960.) (Chapter 13)

71. A window shade opposite a painting of Forry shows up on a chair in the morning, with no evidence of it having fallen. (Chapter 16)

72. Gary Schwartz experienced apparent afterlife communication from Forry and his "Sacred Promise Team" as measured by bursts of energy shown as the output of his data acquisition software.

73. When Gary emailed Paul video files showing the energy bursts recorded at specific, meaningful times on his computer screen, the video files Paul received had geometric shapes in red that were not what Gary sent. (Chapter 11, 16)

74. While Gary and Rhonda were in Sedona to see a first rough cut of *The Life After Death Project*, there were many synchronicities and physical phenomena. (Chapters 11, 23)

75. Mark Macy (an author of a book about spirit faces) had his own face show up with many distortions in an interview taken of him using two separate cameras. Both cameras showed the anomalies. (Chapters 11, 16, 21)

76. When Paul tried to film anomalies that were showing on his computer screen (such as the red rectangles in Gary Schwartz' video files – red rectangles that should not have been there), Paul's computer suddenly began making a horrific noise and his video camera stopped working at the same time. (Chapter 11)

77. Hollace's five dollar white whale figurine, purchased at a swap meet, disappeared from the bag it was in in the back of her car up at Big Bear Lake. It never showed up again. (Chapters 11, 14, 16)

78. The psychic reading from Lisa Marie who lived in the Northeast. She

had sixteen items in her reading (Chapters 11, 14, 16)

79. After spending a couple hours with two friends of Forry, talking about him and some of these incidents, the music on Paul Davids' iPod in his car changed by itself from the music of Bob Dylan to the music of *The Phantom of the Opera*. Lon Chaney as the *Phantom of the Opera* was one of Forry's favorites for his *Famous Monsters* magazine. (Chapters 11, 15, 16, 23)

80. When Paul sought out a notary to notarize his sworn statement, it turned out the notary he went to in Pasadena had known Forrest J Ackerman and her husband had helped Forry move from his first home on Sherbourne to the 18-room Ackermansion on Glendower. A startling synchronicity. (Chapters 11, 16)

81. A psychic in London named Potts predicted for Paul's wife and daughter that the daughter would marry someone she already knew. At that time she had no special man in her life. She did end up marrying someone she had worked with for six years. (Chapter 12)

82. Paul was segment producer in 1983 for a segment on F. Lee Bailey's *Lie Detector* program with psychic detective Dorothy Allison of New Jersey. Dorothy Allison proved truthful. Synchronicity of later working with another New Jersey Allison on similar issues: John Allison, Ph.D. (Chapter 12)

83. Psychic Glennys MacKay from Australia told Whitley Strieber she could see the dead, and when challenged to prove that right then, she gave extraordinary information about "Milton." (Chapter 12)

84. Glennys MacKay said in a reading that someone named Daisy was important having to do with the man involved with the inkblot. (Chapter 12)

85. The psychic reading of Catherine Yunt had many significant "hits." (Chapters 10, 12, 16, 21, 25)

86. Catherine Yunt took Paul Davids to the home and art gallery of the late Ted De Grazia. On a day with no wind, she asked the spirit of Ted de Grazia to ring the bell above his private chapel on his grounds. The bell rang just seconds later. (Chapter 12)

87. In another reading for Paul Davids, Catherine Yunt told Paul he could

be sure she was actually contacting his friend George Pal because of the shoes. Paul was flabbergasted. Only Paul knew that he had visited the grave of George Pal that week and had sung for George's spirit, at the grave, the song "Talented Shoes" from George's film *Tom Thumb*. This psychic reading was videotaped. (Chapter 12)

88. Orit Ish Yemeni Tomer's psychic reading is discussed at length in the book. She had an astonishing number of "hits" that indicated she was bringing through Forrest J Ackerman. (Chapters 7, 12, 13, 21, 23)

89. After hearing Paul Davids and Gary Schwartz on the *Coast to Coast AM* radio show, a psychic contacted Paul with a significant reference to "Frederick / Fritz." (Chapter 12)

90. Russell Maynor's friend Wes Haggard's text messages and the "apport" DVD. (Chapters 13-14)

91. A pair of mismatched shoes Paul Davids had set aside in the morning, while organizing his shoes, showed up as a perfectly matched pair when Paul checked back upstairs a few hours later. (Chapter 14)

92. $40 shows up one morning in Bob Rotstan's wallet that was empty the night before. (Chapter 14)

93. Twice it sounds like someone is trying to break into Bob's Rotstan's house. The dog barks at the front door. Handle jiggles. No one there either time. Never was a break-in. (Chapter 14)

94. Bob Rotstan was getting dressed in his tuxedo to join Paul Davids for the Golden Globe Awards. Suddenly he could not find his cummerbund that he had out ready to put on. It apparently vanishes… and shows up neatly folded in his wife's under-wear drawer days later. (Chapter 14)

95. Paul Davids' friend Saundra from near Scottsdale is motivated to buy and gift him a book of the paintings of Frank R. Paul (one of Forry's favorite artists, whose works Forry commissioned and collected). Paul and Saundra had not been in touch for year or more. (Chapters 14-16)

96. Paul Davids' friend Saundra sees that missing sunglasses have shown up when she is with Paul – they had been missing from her car for 6 months, and

the car had been washed several times. When they appeared they were in plain sight… in the car. (Chapters 14, 16)

97. Hollace Davids had a pair of earrings vanish under mysterious circumstances. (Chapter 14)

98. Another "disappearance" incident for Hollace Davids. Her ID badge for her work at Universal Pictures vanished… and then appeared under mysterious circumstances. (Chapter 14)

99. Joe Moe's casino player's card and Sean Fernald's Eyemed insurance card both showed up in the upper desk drawer of Paul's home office. There was no reason for either card to be there. (Chapter 14)

100. Paul Davids' sport coat vanished in the Santa Fe house, then showed up on top of the treadmill control panel. That room had been searched for the sport coat. (Chapter 14)

101. The door from the kitchen to the garage in the Santa Fe house closed by itself three times in one day… and it never closes by itself. This happened while a DVD player mysteriously stopped working, and when the DVD player started working again the door phenomena stopped. (Chapter 14)

102. A lifetime of Ron Waite's correspondence with Sara Karloff is delivered to Paul unexpectedly by UPS within an hour of Paul fixing an error that involved Sara's father, Boris Karloff, while Paul is editing the film *The Life After Death Project*. Ron had not mentioned he was sending it. (Chapter 14)

103. Also in the box from Ron Waite was a drawing of a haunted house adapted from an H. P. Lovecraft story called "From Beyond." Ron Waite had signed it saying "Greetings from Beyond." (Chapter 14)

104. Also in the box: Forry's *Wizard of Oz* watch, with the hands stopped at a couple minutes to twelve. Forry died at two minutes to midnight. Ron said he had not tampered with the watch and did not even know what time Forry died. (Chapters 14, 23)

105. Gary Schwartz, in front of several witnesses while they were discussing Forrest J Ackerman, experienced the alarm of a travel alarm clock going off. It was buried in the chair in which he was seated. The hands of the

clock were at a couple minutes to twelve. He had not set the alarm and had forgotten the clock was even there. (Chapters 14-15, 23)

106. A roll of toilet paper moves unexplainably across Gary Schwartz's private bathroom. (Chapters 14, 23)

107. For Paul Davids, a Google search of the words "sci-fi" and "Taken" turns up a link about Forrest J Ackerman's ruminations on death, about taking photos at his grave before he departed) and giving those photos to Joe Moe. (Chapter 15)

108. Scot Johnson, appearing as a narrator on set for *The Life After Death Project* warns Paul Davids he will have to stop filming and depart in the unlikely chance he gets an emergency call from his lab up at Los Alamos. He gets an emergency call and prepares to leave and two minutes later the emergency is canceled. (Chapter 15)

109. Scot Johnson relocated with his family to Germany, taking a new job there. His first day there, he got in jogging shorts and went out for a run and discovered he was on Ackermanstrasse. (Chapter 15)

110. Lengthy video files of ITC expert Mark Macy were copied from one hard drive to another after Paul Davids had quit editing for the night at 5 a.m. No command was given to copy those files. (Chapter 15)

111. Paul took from a shelf at random one of the fifteen binders of Ackerman archives he had obtained at the estate auction. To his amazement, a piece of paper fell out of the binder almost immediately that had a name he had been searching for: Michael Shearer. A few minutes later he got an email message from Facebook telling him he had a message from Michael Shearer. And that message was a couple weeks old! (Chapter 15)

112. Paul Davids came downstairs one morning to find that the computer he had left on overnight had an open photo file of Forrest J Ackerman with film director Joe Dante. Yes, Paul had that among his thousands of photos, but he had not opened it! And here it was, filling the whole screen. (Chapter 15)

113. The master file of *The Life After Death Project* lost all sound on the soundtrack from the moment there was a discussion of Forry Ackerman's gesture of the silence of death – all the sound was gone from that point to the

end. (Chapter 15)

114. The hard drive with the only file of Ray Bradbury's speech at the Ackerman tribute was damaged. A phone call notified Paul that the hard drive was restored inexplicably – the phone call came within minutes of Paul walking away from Forry's crypt. (Chapter 15)

115. An image of the Messenger Art Collection's key four paintings inexplicably showed up in Paul's IPhone photo files while he was visiting the Messenger Art Collection. (Chapter 15)

116. Writer Robert Egby wrote Paul Davids an email telling what happened when he and his girlfriend watched the DVD of *The Life After Death Project*. When it was done she checked her iPhone for messages and accidentally pressed the navigation button. Navigation showed a location about ten miles away of Ackerman Road. (Chapter 15)

117. The fire started in Eva's gas fireplace without anyone igniting the gas. They had been discussing Ray Bradbury and Forrest J Ackerman at the time. (Chapter 15)

118. The mystery of the cat balls of Ian Johnston – cat balls showing up that belonged to his deceased cat that he had named Forrest J Ackerman. Also, the sensation of the cat jumping on the bed at night, but the cat was deceased. (Chapter 16)

119. The mystery of the Davids' kitchen lights and kitchen fans that turned on by themselves, and which the Davids attempted to use as a communication code with Forrest J Ackerman. (Chapter 16)

120. The name Joel Clark Ackerman just appeared one day on the cast list for *The Life After Death Project* at imdb.com. His name didn't belong there, and his middle name happens to coincide with Forry's "disputed" middle name from a photo of Forry as a child. (Chapter 16)

121. The birthday greeting from one of Paul's friends that said "I am monitored to cause the reaction…WOW!" showed up on Paul's dining room table around the time *The Life After Death Project* was accepted for the Syfy Channel. Paul always kept that greeting in his office and did not move it, nor did anyone else as far as could be determined. (Chapter 16)

122. The day Paul Davids was about to set out for the Grand Canyon with his son Scott (for a full descent of the canyon) his portrait, painted by L. J. Dopp, fell off the wall. (Chapter 16)

123. A strip of black duct tape Paul Davids had put over the lens of his iPad to prevent spying vanished overnight. Once again, it was when he was alone in the Santa Fe house. It happened a second time a few weeks later in the Los Angeles house, and this time the tape vanished from a computer. (Chapter 16)

124. There is an unconfirmed story L. J. Dopp heard from a fan of Forry who does not want to be mentioned by name. He had many models of various movie monsters. He claimed the day after Forry died, one after the other the movie monster models fell off their shelves. Supposedly he sobbed. Paul Davids was unable to talk to the person it was supposed to have happened to – only L. J. Dopp had that privilege. (Chapter 16)

125. In the Saint James Hotel in the old Western town of Cimarron, Paul Davids was invited to participate in an all-night ghost hunt. He went into the poker room that was still much as it had been in the 1800's. He played at having a hand of poker with a pretend ghost while being filmed with an electromagnetic field sensor visible in frame. To his amazement, the meter registered increased increased electo-magnetic fields every time the ghost was dealt a card that improved his hand. (Chapter 16)

126. The Vincent van Gogh mask on Dr. Shermer's mantel at the headquarters of the Sceptics Society. (Chapter 16)

127. Dr. Shermer received a visit from George Clayton Johnson, an elderly *Twilight Zone* writer he had never met before, on the same day Paul Davids interviewed him. George Clayton Johnson had been a lifelong close friend of Forrest J Ackerman, so it had the appearance of an emissary of Forry showing up at the home of the nation's leading skeptic the day of his interview about the Forry phenomena. (Chapter 16)

128. In September, 2015, the tempered glass shower door in the Davids' ground floor bathroom shattered at about two in the morning into thousands of little pieces of glass. (Chapter 16)

129. Dr. Stanislav O'Jack of Rock Springs, Wyoming, discovered that an

exhibit from the Forrest J Ackerman collection (of science fiction and horror posters from the 1950's) went on display at his local library at the same time he was proofreading this book. (Chapter 16)

130. Ricardo Flores received phone calls on two separate IPhones from Frank Goodman on the day of Frank Goodman's death, after Frank Goodman had passed away. Frank Goodman is Paul Davids' father-in-law. (Chapter 16)

131. There have been dozens of instances of pennies showing up at odd times and places for Paul Davids and his sister, Jeanie, beginning the week their mother, Frances Davids, passed away. The pennies often appear in places where it was known for a fact there was no penny there moments before – sometimes beside a framed photo of their mother or other items reminiscent of her. Weeks before she died, Frances Davids gifted Paul a pouch with pennies that had belonged to his father, making a "penny connection" between them. (Chapter 16)

132. Marilyn Monroe Incident: Philippe Mora's Mac boots itself up, untouched by anyone, at a key moment that a theory of Marilyn Monroe's death (as murder) was being discussed in front of the computer. This was caught on video. (Chapter 16)

133. Marilyn Monroe Incident: Philippe and Pamela Mora's framed photo of Marilyn from the Golden Dreams calendar was the only item from a coffee table to be found on the tile floor, cracked (i.e., no earthquake). It was found when they awoke in the morning. This happened when there was bad news for Marilyn having the truth about her death broadcast to the world: Two national TV interviews with Philippe about her death (as murder) had been abruptly canceled the day before. (Chapter 16)

134. Marilyn Monroe Indicident: Paul Davids (while at work producing *Marilyn Monroe Declassified*) talked artist Max Lehmann into creating a sculpture Max depicting Marilyn Monroe as a robot. Max went out for Chinese food a day two later and his fortune cookie said: A blonde from afar has something interesting for you. (Chapter 16)

135: Marilyn Monroe Incident: The Chinese Theater in Hollywood sends, as a Christmas gift to Hollace Davids, a photo of Marilyn Monroe putting her handprints in cement. They did not know of her involvement with a new film

about Marilyn. They send out 10 different photo gifts and she “happened” to receive Marilyn. (Chapter 16)

136: Marilyn Monroe Incident: Catherine Yunt gives a reading to Paul with implied Marilyn connections (about a deceased female entertainer involved with someone from the world of baseball, i.e., Joe DiMaggio). Catherine knew nothing about Paul’s new Marilyn Monroe film, which was still secret. (Chapter 16)

137. Marilyn Monroe Incident: Paul and Hollace are attend a Christmas party which happens to be at the Mauretania where JFK is reported to have had a rendezvous with Marilyn Monroe. Their frames photos are in several places in the hallways. (Chapter 16)

138. Marilyn Monroe Incident: While editing a sequence for *Marilyn Monroe Declassified* with testimony from Sgt. Jack Clemmons (who was first to investigate the scene of Marilyn’s death), Paul took a break and went to the upstairs bedroom. The TV was on, with a freeze frame image of Sgt. Jack Clemmons. It was coming from a DVD player that had that image in its memory, but Paul had not turned on that DVD or the TV. (Chapter 16)

139: Marilyn Monroe Incident: Paul got the idea to use a tag line in his movie about Marilyn: “Let Justice be Done Though the Heavens May Fall.” Minutes later, he and Hollace both observed that their TV had a freeze frame of the face of Marilyn. Again, the image was in the memory of a DVD player attached to the TV, but they had not turned that on, and they had been in the middle of watching another show. (Chapter 16)

140. A poster from a 1993 Famous Monsters convention in Crystal City, Virginia, honoring Forry, was no longer hanging on the wall in the Santa Fe house. Somehow it was moved to the floor, leaning against a cabinet. The dates on the poster overlapped the dates of the upcoming return to the Ackermansion by the Davids and Schwartz team for research. (Chapter 26)

141. The night of May 28, 2015, during the séance at the Ackermansion, skeptical scientist Dieter Steklis was seated alongside psychic Jamie Clark on a couch in the living room. Suddenly the whole couch began to vibrate. Dieter reported it at first, and it increased. His son, seated behind the couch, touched it and confirmed it. The couch was thoroughly inspected afterwards. (Chapter 26)

142. The day before this book went to the publishers, Dr. Allison experienced an array of phenomena that mirrored phenomena that had happened before – a major ink incident with a poster, incidents with a vibrating couch, the Furby, a fan, a computer, scattered papers. (Chapter 26)

About the Authors and Contributors

PAUL DAVIDS

Paul Jeffrey Davids' previous major work on this subject is *The Life After Death Project*. It showed on the Syfy Channel, not because it was a sci-fi work of fiction (it was not!) but because it involved Forrest J Ackerman who is widely known in the science fiction genre. He followed that with a sequel, *The Life After Death Project 2 – Personal Encounters*. The two documentaries are offered together as a DVD set.

Mr. Davids is from Bethesda, Maryland, the son of a famous Georgetown University professor of American History, Dr. Jules Davids. Dr. Davids worked extensively with John F. Kennedy on the writing of *Profiles in Courage* (for which he is credited in the Preface). Jules Davids was a professor to Jacqueline Kennedy and later to Georgetown undergraduate Bill Clinton.

Paul Davids is a graduate of Princeton University, where he majored in psychology and won numerous awards in writing. He then attended the American Film Institute Center for Advanced Film Studies in Beverly Hills. He is married to Hollace Davids, who is Senior Vice-President of Special Projects for Universal Pictures and who has produced several of his films.

Paul Davids began in Hollywood working for agent Paul Kohner (where he read all the script submissions for Charles Bronson, John Huston and even William Wyler). He also worked as a segment producer for F. Lee Bailey's television series *Lie Detector*. His career in film and television took off when he was hired as production coordinator (and a writer) of the original *The Transformers* TV show for Marvel Productions. He co-wrote (with Hollace Davids) a book called *The Fires of Pele: Mark Twain's Legendary Lost Journal*, and then the husband and wife team co-wrote six *Star War*s sequel novels for Lucasfilm and Bantam books, including the award-winning *Mission from Mount Yoda*, plus *The Glove of Darth Vader*, *The Lost City of the Jedi*, *Zorba the Hutt's Revenge*, *Queen of the Empire* and *Prophets of the Dark Side*. Their *Star Wars*

books sold millions of copies and were published in many languages.

Paul Davids is also a prolific artist whose paintings have been displayed at many galleries (www.pauldavids-artist.com). He is a member of the Writers Guild of America and Producers Guild of America.

Above all, Paul Davids has been active in Los Angeles for decades as a producer and director. His production, *Roswell*, for Showtime, is something of a TV classic, having been broadcast hundreds of times since its TV premiere in 1994. Four of Paul Davids' films are distributed to TV by NBCUniversal International Television, including *Starry Night* (www.starrynightmovie.com), *The Sci-Fi Boys*, *Jesus in India* (www.jesus-in-india-the-movie.com) and also the 2010 drama, *Before We Say Goodbye*. (www.beforewesaygoodbye.com). His films include *The Artist and the Shaman* and also *Timothy Leary's Dead*. His writing career in Los Angeles got its start with *She Dances Alone*, a docu-drama about the immortal ballet dancer, Vaslav Nijinsky. His most recent film is *Marilyn Monroe Declassified* (www.marilyndeclassified.com), due for release in 2016.

GARY E. SCHWARTZ, Ph.D.

Dr. Gary E. Schwartz is a Professor of Psychology, Medicine, Neurology, Psychiatry, and Surgery, and Director of the Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health, at the University of Arizona. He is also Corporate Director of Development of Energy Healing at Canyon Ranch in Arizona, where he gives regular lectures and workshops. Dr. Schwartz is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, the American Psychological Society, the Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research, and the Society of Behavioral Medicine. He has published more than 450 scientific papers and chapters, including 6 papers in the journal Science, co-edited 11 academic books, and published 7 books for the general public.

Gary E. Schwartz would never have guessed that he would end up becoming an internationally known researcher integrating science and spirituality. He certainly never expected to be involved in controversial experiments on the topics of life after death and the existence of a greater spiritual reality. As an undergraduate at Cornell University and a graduate student at Harvard University, he would never have predicted that he would end

up authoring spiritual science books with titles such as *The Sacred Promise: How Science is Discovering Spirits' Collaboration with Us in Our Daily Lives*, and *Synchronicity and the One Mind: How the New Self-Science of Super-Timing Can Transform Our Lives*. Or books like *The Truth About Medium, The G.O.D. Experiments* and *The Afterlife Experiments*. He also never could have foreseen receiving awards such as the 2012 Distinguished Contribution to the Science of Psychology Award from the Arizona Psychological Association. That award was given for his pioneering research on spiritual psychology and parapsychology.

Perhaps least of all did Dr. Schwartz expect to co-author, with film producer/director Paul Davids, a book called *An Atheist in Heaven*. The experience of having been part of the investigation of the Forrest J Ackerman afterlife case has been quite overwhelming and always surprising.

Dr. Schwartz grew up on Long Island, New York, in a non-religious (and non-spiritual) science and musically focused home. Though he graduated as an Honor Society student from North Babylon Senior High School, his passion for music (e.g., he played professional soul rock and roll and funky jazz guitar for ten years) competed with his academic pursuits.

He began his undergraduate education as an electrical engineering student at Cornell, however, he quickly discovered his interests were broader than engineering. Gary transferred into Arts and Sciences, where he ended up becoming a pre-medical student majoring in psychology and minoring in chemistry.

After graduating Magnum Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Cornell, he spent a year at the University of Wisconsin as a graduate student in clinical psychology and psychophysiology, where he also took first year medical school courses in human biophysics and physiology. Inspired by an invited colloquium lecture presented by Professor Jerome Bruner of Harvard University, Gary became motivated to transfer to the Department of Social Relations at Harvard University. There he received his MA in clinical psychology and his Ph.D. in personality and psychophysiology.

After five years as an Assistant Professor at Harvard, Dr. Schwartz was recruited by Yale University, where he became a Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry, Director of the Yale Psychophysiology Center, and Co-Director of

the Yale Behavioral Medicine Program. During this time he won numerous awards including an Early Career Award for Distinguished Research from the American Psychological Association. He also served as the President of the Health Psychology Division of the American Psychological Association.

Despite Dr. Schwartz's historical roots in New York and New England, he felt a calling for the Southwest. His love for science and music was complemented by his love for Native American art and culture, and when the opportunity presented itself for him to move to the University of Arizona, his "heart" inspired his "head" to make this significant change. Though his colleagues thought he was committing academic suicide, it turned out that the move could not have been more propitious. The openness and innovativeness of the University of Arizona environment, coupled with the unique resources of the greater Tucson community, including the presence of two distinguished health resorts – Canyon Ranch and Miraval – nurtured Dr. Schwartz's evolution from mainstream science to visionary science and its applications.

Dr. Schwartz is highly experienced in public speaking on subjects ranging from health, psychology and energy medicine to spiritual science. He has been interviewed on major network television shows including *Dateline* and *Good Morning America*, as well as on MSNBC, *Nightline, Anderson Cooper 360*, and *The O'Reilly Factor*. His work has been the subject of documentaries and profiles on Discovery, HBO, Arts & Entertainment, Fox and the SciFi Channel (now Syfy), among others. Dr. Schwartz has been interviewed on many hundreds of radio shows, including five evenings on *Coast to Coast AM*, and on NPR, PBS, CBC and BBC. His work has been described in numerous magazines and newspapers, including *USA Today, The London Times, The New York Times*, and *The Los Angeles Times*, as well as a feature profile in *Biography* magazine.

Recently Dr. Schwartz served as the host and co-organizer for the 2014 International Summit on Post-Materialist Science, Spirituality, and Society (www.opensciences.org), and he is active in helping to awaken both scientists and the general public to the emerging transformation in our understanding of nature and the cosmos.

Dr. Schwartz lives with his wife, Rhonda Eklund Schwartz, author of *Love Eternal*. Together, they spend many hours relishing their extensive collection of Pacific Northwest Coast Art, Southwest Art, Plains Native American Art, and African Art.

DR. JOHN ALLISON

John Allison received his B.S. degree in Chemistry at what is now Widener University (formerly Pennsylvania Military College) in suburban Philadelphia. Born and raised in Philly, he took a small step across state lines to attend the University of Delaware, where he received a Ph.D. in Physical Chemistry. One of his dreams was to live in New York City, and upon receiving support for a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Science Foundation, he was thrilled to negotiate a postdoc with Professor Richard Zare at Columbia University. However, before he could begin, Professor Zare moved to Stanford University in Palo Alto, CA, and Dr. Allison followed.

He taught for 25 years in the Chemistry Department at Michigan State University (MSU) before "retiring" from MSU and moving back East to The College of New Jersey, where he currently is the Director of the Forensic Chemistry Program in the Chemistry Department. He has published more than 100 papers in top journals, and made more than 250 presentations on his research.

Dr. Allison is also an occasional writer of fiction and nonfiction. He has had 10 minute plays produced in one-act play festivals, and a full-length play produced by the Twin City Players (St. Joseph, MI) entitled *Bud's Used People Lot* – a story based on the end of his father's life in a nursing home. Of note, there is a scene where, in a dream, he talks to his father's spirit about how one lives on after death.

He has written one book about (of all things) a beauty salon, *Saturday Night at Sarah Joy's*. Proceeds from the sale of this book continue to go the New Jersey Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund.

For a few years, he wrote monologues. Twenty-three of his works were read/performed at venues such as Kate Daly's Monologue Mania in Bloomfield, NJ, and Tulis McCall's Monologues and Madness in Greenwich Village.

He is a big supporter of a website called ReadWave, where authors post short stories and poetry. He has about 70 stories and poems on ReadWave which have been read more than 25,000 times as of November 2015. (He also writes for ReadWave under the name of A. Rocco.)

In his spare time, he can be found on the Barnegat Bay in New Jersey, on

the sailing vessel Abby-Gale, or practicing with his friends and band members, The New Jersey Connection.

Of note, John felt incredibly blessed since his mother came from a family of 10 children, so he grew up with 20 loving aunts and uncles. It felt like much less of a blessing as he grew up and realized that he had to watch all of them die. This makes the topic of this book of particular importance to him.

He dedicates his writing, especially here, to his late uncle, Haskel Winslow, the smartest person he ever knew. Uncle Haskel always encouraged him to THINK, which continues to be a good exercise in life.

JACK KELLEHER

Jack Kelleher is a freelance writer living in Pennsylvania. He has several different professions, serving as a copy editor, a clerk in bookstores, a manager of the electronics section at a local department store, a porter for Strawbridge & Clothier, and he has also done time ("mercifully briefly," he says) as a burner and grinder in a steel mill. An admirer of Forrest J Ackerman's love of puns and wordplay, Jack sums up his biography by saying that although he likes chess, he has lived a checkered life. Jack's avocations include writing songs and playing the guitar, portrait drawing, gardening and collecting pop culture memorabilia focusing on The Beatles and Classic Monsters. His early interest in the paranormal led to his position as writer/editor at Llewellyn Publications in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he worked with noted astrologer and opera singer Noel Tyl. But none of his paranormal studies prepared Jack for what he was to experience as part of the Forrest J Ackerman case, which he describes as "eye-opening, even for a believer."

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

For news about future companion publications, such as verbatim transcripts of medium readings related to this case of afterlife communication, new scientific papers about the evidence, etc., check for updates at www.atheistinheaven.com

At the website, you can order additional trade paperback copies of this book, and you can obtain the 2-DVD set that includes the feature documentary *The Life After Death Project* and also *The Life After Death Project 2 – Personal Encounters*. The website for those documentaries is: www.lifeafterdeathproject.com

INDEX

In the EPUB version of this book, page numbers will not correspond if the reader changes font size or layout.

4

4E 26, 105, 123, 124, 125, 240, 253

A

Academy Awards 239, 253

Ackerman000 46, 92, 144, 283

Ackerman, Forrest J. Entries Exceed Listing Capacity

Ackerman, Wendayne 46, 51, 61, 74, 76-77, 79, 89, 94, 189, 234, 240, 246, 247, 308, 310, 452, 461-463, 465-467

Ackermansion Entries Exceed Listing Capacity

Acker-mini-mansion 51, 131, 251, 466

ADC 10, 23, 337, 373, 384, 428, 429

agenticity 133, 141, 149, 271, 286, 318, 334, 337

Allison, Dorothy 235, 236, 485

Allison, John 1, 5, 21, 23-24, 58, 88, 94, 96-97, 102-103, 126, 128-130, 192, 198, 229, 240, 253, 276, 278-279, 323, 332-343, 345, 422, 453, 457-458, 472, 485, 498

Amazing Forries 135, 136

Amazing Stories 135, 136

American Film Institute 70, 178, 494

Ammerman, Gina

Ammerman, Gina 84

Amodei 43-44, 50, 53-55, 57, 75, 94, 113-114, 120, 136, 298, 314

anomalies 24, 28-29, 100, 134, 162, 168, 200, 220, 225, 227, 229, 263, 276, 325, 334-356, 394, 412-413, 415, 421-422, 433, 435, 437, 462, 484

apparition 52, 452, 459, 460, 475

atheist 7, 8, 9, 11, 24, 26, 162, 468

Atheist in Heaven 17, 315, 481, 496

B

Baker, Elizabeth 145, 209, 213, 309

Baker, Rick 25, 44, 253

barium chromate 115

Barton, Fred 231, 232

bead mask 190

Before We Say Goodbye 95, 100, 175, 196, 483, 495

Bid Time Return 160, 200

Blackie, Andrea 351

Bonnie Barker 228

Brinkley, Dannion 200

Bruno, Giordano 174

butanol 118

C

Cambridge 226, 227, 231

Canadian filmmakers 258, 419, 449

Canyon Ranch

Canyon Ranch 215, 400, 402, 409, 495, 497

capillary action 116

CAPTCHA 45, 46, 47, 144, 475

carousel tray 187, 188

Chaney, Lon 74, 92, 152, 232, 480, 485

Clark, Jamie 5, 249, 459, 464, 493

Clemmons, Sgt. Jack 329, 330, 493

Cohen, Jerry 215, 400

Congo 239

consciousness 9, 35, 152, 174, 233, 238, 247, 250, 338, 346, 348, 350-351, 357, 358, 359, 360, 362, 363, 371, 373, 380, 382, 387, 409, 426, 427, 430, 433, 439, 440, 444, 450

Creedence Clearwater Revival 102, 122

D

daddy longlegs 150, 151, 152, 479, 480

Daisy 237, 238, 485

Dante, Joe 283, 284, 489

Darwin, Charles 341, 342

Davids, Frances 38, 40, 323, 491

Davids, Hollace 5, 43, 179, 199, 214 346, 453, 482, 487, 492, 494

Davids, Dr. Jules 38, 40, 494

Davids, Paul 3, 8, 12-17, 21, 25, 29, 38, 55, 65-68, 105-107, 110-111, 114, 116, 119, 121, 128, 130-131, 141, 153, 158, 170, 175, 183, 191-192, 199, 201, 213-216, 232, 268, 274, 280, 284, 290, 311, 341, 343, 345-346, 354, 375, 385, 410, 413-414, 446, 449-450, 452, 473, 475-481, 483, 485-496

Davids, Scott M. 62

Dr. Cassie Taylor

DeGrazia, Ted 242

del Rio, Rebekah 189

del Toro, Guillermo 25, 44, 61

DHCI 215, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 396, 402

Disappearing Act 159, 160, 162, 172

Disney, Walt 23, 241, 242, 428

document examination 104

Dopp, L. J. 2, 5, 81, 89, 135, 136, 138, 140, 171, 172, 285, 309, 311, 313, 476, 490

Doyle, Sir Arthur 36, 37, 247

Duvall, Huxley 28

Dwellers in the Dust 74, 75

Dwyer, Jeanie 324

dye 86, 108, 112, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119

Dylan, Bob 69, 232, 233, 485

E

echolocation 227

Edwards, Frank 105

Egby, Robert 291, 489

Egyptian Theater 44, 45, 47, 50, 223, 286

Einstein, Albert 8, 9, 348, 361, 444, 467

EKG 200

electromagnetic field 181, 219, 227, 229, 316, 471, 481, 482, 491

electromagnetic fields 220

EMF 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 316, 473

Esperanto 24, 124, 170

Estrella, Al 261

ethyl acetate 118

EVP 141, 185, 219, 220, 250, 279, 453, 462, 481, 482

EXPLORE 379, 381, 385

F

Facebook 45, 144, 150, 162, 165, 167, 170, 171, 172, 282, 292, 479, 481, 489

FACT 351, 352, 371, 372, 388, 426, 450

Famous Monsters 3, 26, 51, 52, 54-56, 59-60, 62-67, 89, 105, 131, 139, 140, 153, 151-155, 157, 161, 165, 172, 174, 192, 194-195, 231, 234, 238, 245, 253, 256, 261, 284, 297, 307, 319, 454, 478, 483, 485, 493

Fast, Jonathan 69

Fate magazine 135, 136, 137, 138, 158, 305, 478

FEDORA LOUNGE 169

Fernald, Sean 5, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 221, 266, 267, 268, 292, 294, 326, 346, 419, 420, 452, 453, 478, 479, 480, 487

Fernald, Silke 5, 143, 146, 147, 148, 228, 478

ferrule 115

Fitzgerald, F. Scott 70

Five Additive Criteria Test 351, 450

FMOF 26, 62, 63, 65, 66

Fojack 24, 170

Forest Lawn 45, 77, 94, 253, 256, 287, 288

Forever Family Foundation 448

Forry Entries Exceed Listing Capacity

Forry Entries Exceed Listing Capacity

Forry's Helping Hand Award 155

Fourier 384

Frankenstein 59, 64, 89, 91, 92, 93, 132, 153, 154, 272, 273, 313

fugue state 28, 263, 264, 460

Furby 123-124, 240, 276, 473, 478

G

Galde, Phyllis 5, 135

Gamma Zone 166

gas chromatography 86, 87, 88

Gelb, Edward 235

Generous, Rochanya 243-244, 420

Georgetown 38-39, 494

glitch art 219

Gogos, Basil 25

Golden Globe Award 25

Goodman, Frank 322, 323, 491

gorilla 55, 152, 214, 452

Gorillas in the Mist 452

Greene, James 261

H

Haggard, Wes 256, 259, 486

Halifax 45, 47, 92, 93, 144, 150, 297, 315, 476

Hammond, Ben 152, 479

Harryhausen, Ray 57, 64, 66, 75, 139, 157, 223, 250, 254, 467, 476

Harvard 12, 200, 202, 348, 350, 358, 392, 431, 434, 438, 439, 441, 442, 443, 447, 496, 497

hawk feather 211, 483

Heaven 7, 10, 315, 323, 373, 481, 483, 496

Hebrew 64, 71, 244, 245

Heinlein, Robert 80

Hereafter 159, 160, 225

Hewlett Packard 99

Hitchcock, Alfred 37

Houdini, Harry 12, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 241, 247, 348, 385, 394, 400, 402, 403, 413, 414, 435, 449, 467, 475

House of Pies 131, 251, 253, 256

Hubbard, L. Ron 73

Huichol 189, 190, 194, 221, 290, 295, 308, 323

Hunchback of Notre Dame 74, 480

Huston, John 70, 222, 248, 249, 250, 494

Huxley, Aldous 28, 29, 30

Hyman, Dr. Ray 430, 431, 432, 446

I

Imp of The Perverse 221

Incredible Shrinking Man 80, 200, 315

Indiana University 82, 85, 105

inkblot 39, 43, 44, 50, 53, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 87, 96, 97, 98, 100, 115, 137, 138, 140, 150, 175, 181, 183, 184, 186, 196, 211, 212, 237, 245, 264, 290, 335, 336, 391, 471, 476, 477, 485

inkjet printer 106, 108, 119

Instrumental Trans-Communication 219, 278, 279, 281, 283, 284, 285, 301, 303, 346, 374, 396

Invisible Ink Man 158, 159, 163, 174

Invisible Ink Men 139, 141, 162, 213, 320, 478

Invisible Man 76, 162, 332

IPhone 45, 489

Iron Man 3 168, 169, 481

ITC 219, 278, 279, 281, 289, 291, 346, 374, 488

J

Jackson, Peter 25, 44, 178

Jillette, Penn 37, 438, 439, 440, 441, 443, 444, 445

Johnson, George Clayton 317, 491

Johnson, Scot 5, 279, 280-281, 488

Johnston, Ian Paul 5, 45, 46, 49, 57, 88, 257, 271, 283, 296, 298, 300, 305, 419, 475, 490

Jung, Dr. Carl 147, 149

K

Karloff, Boris 59, 92, 272, 487

Karloff, Sara 272, 273, 274, 487

Kelleher, Jack 5, 21, 76, 156, 160, 164, 166, 171, 175, 189, 200, 239, 283, 332, 345, 423, 480, 499

Kennedy, John F. 39, 494

Kim, Philip *60*

King Kong 44, 52, 73, 89, 214, 239, 461

King Lear 149

King, Stephen 62, 161

Kitei, Dr. Lynne 204

Klinger, Bob 473

Kohner, Paul 70, 201, 222 248, 249, 279, 494

L

Lambert, Brian Thomas 189, 261

Landis, John 25, 44, 61, 240

Lang, Fritz 61, 92, 228

Langspecht, Carl 211, 323, 483

Las Rocas de San Alejandro 147, 292, 419, 479

laser desorption 88, 107, 112, 114, 478

Lenore 83, 140, 141, 186, 220, 250, 279, 481, 482

Levin, Tamar 244, 245

Liberare anima 128

Lie Detector 71, 235, 485, 494

Lincoln, Abraham 7, 40, 467

Lisa Marie 225, 271, 310, 484

LODI 102

Love Eternal 348, 406, 498

Lovecraft, H. P. 272, 273, 467, 488

Lucas, George 3, 12, 25

Lugosi, Bela 91, 92, 93, 156, 157, 158, 160, 188, 297, 476, 480

M

MacDonald, Michael 45-46, 49, 88, 92, 143-144, 150, 257, 258, 271, 283, 292, 296, 297, 419, 475-476, 479

Mack, Dr. John 202

MacKay, Glennys 5, 199, 237, 238, 247, 485

Macy, Mark 5, 219, 220, 230, 281, 283, 292, 374, 484, 488

Magic Castle 13, 45, 271, 449, 461, 462

mantel 101, 121, 185, 317, 323, 471, 477, 491

Maria the Robotrix 92

Marilyn Monroe Declassified 469, 492, 493, 495

Martin, Edward T. 209, 210, 270

mass spectrometer 88, 107, 112, 478

mass spectrometry 104, 126

materialist reductionist 260

Matheson, Richard 5, 80, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 172, 199, 200, 201, 202, 224, 315

Maynor, Russell 5, 251, 252, 253, 256, 257, 272, 287, 288, 453, 483, 486

McGee, Mark 234

medium 12-13, 33-34, 167, 177, 199, 206, 225-226, 230, 237-238, 241, 244, 247-249, 273, 304, 310, 374, 375, 376-378, 383, 396-397, 399-402, 405, 432, 435, 447, 460-461, 467, 500

methanol 118

Metropolis 61, 65, 68, 89, 92, 228, 234, 300, 307

Mills, Todd 175, 186, 194, 208, 259, 317, 473, 482

Miracles in the Storm 374

Moe, Joe 5, 44, 50, 51-53, 55, 84, 92-94, 137, 142-143, 146-147, 165, 201, 211, 222, 237-238, 240, 246-247, 251, 254-255, 266-268, 273, 277-278, 326, 453, 463, 466-467, 470, 475-476, 478-480, 484, 487-488

Molly 177, 178, 179, 181, 184, 185, 235, 471, 482

Monroe, Marilyn 289, 330, 469, 492-493, 495

Monster Memories 157, 163-164, 170, 480

Mora, Phillipe and Pamela 327, 492

Mulholland Drive 189

Muren, Dennis 25, 253

My Proof of Survival 135

N

NBC Universal 43, 72, 216, 495

NDE 384, 428

Noory, George 248, 453

Norton Simon Musem 191, 194

NOTW 254, 255

O

O'Jack, Dr. Stanislav 5, 314, 315, 316, 491

O'Quinn, Kerry 251, 252, 253, 256, 483

obliteration 42, 44, 50, 52-53, 57, 58, 82, 84-88, 94, 96, 98, 106-110, 112-121, 134-136, 138-141, 170, 175, 181, 183-184, 188, 196, 199, 202-203, 210, 221, 231-232, 237, 264, 292, 298, 305, 312, 319, 326, 332, 420, 422, 456, 471, 475-478, 481

occipital cortex 360, 361, 362

opilionids arachnids 151

orange juice 271, 417, 418, 420, 422, 449

Oscars 239

Other Side 8, 10, 11, 48, 124, 205, 214, 233, 244, 304, 319, 332, 337, 347,

381, 414, 446, 468, 470

P

Painter, Deborah 5, 130, 228, 310

Pal, George 61, 66, 70, 89, 178, 179, 180, 181, 211, 232, 241, 242, 243, 250, 251, 261, 293, 294, 486

paranormal 33-34, 37, 39, 53, 73-76, 82, 90, 139, 142, 167, 173-174, 184-185, 188, 197-198, 202, 213, 223, 259-260, 279, 314, 318, 326, 337-340, 342, 347, 376, 378, 383, 429, 453, 465, 500

Paul, Frank R. 79, 135, 264 486

Paul Kohner Agency 70, 201

Penn and Teller 37, 437-438

periodic table 226, 228, 230

Personal Encounters 142, 304, 316, 494, 500

Phantom of the Opera 232, 233, 276, 313, 422, 480, 485

pholcid 151

photomultiplier 381, 385, 396, 400, 405, 435

photon 348, 367, 370, 381, 382, 385, 386, 401, 403

pigment 107-108, 115-117-472

Pit and the Pendulum 159

placebo effects 376

Playboy 59, 64

Poe, Edgar Allan 61, 73, 83, 140, 141, 186, 220, 221, 229, 250, 409, 476, 482

Popoff, Peter 202

post-mortem 58, 90, 95, 102, 105, 138, 142, 143, 144, 155

Princeton 69, 70, 96, 97, 106, 325, 332, 346, 494

Psi Wars 86

Pulitzer Prize 39, 203

Purdue University 82, 85, 105

R

Ramar of The Jungle 130, 310

Randi, James 34, 202, 203

rater bias 375

Red Velvet 142

Removal Test 359, 360, 361

Rick, Suzanne 132, 477

Ritz-Carlton 28, 213

Rivera, Geraldo 445-447

Robot Man 231

Roderick, Sue and Abel 289-291, 327

Rollings, Mark 5, 134, 451, 458-459

Roswell 71, 95, 111, 191, 198, 214, 216, 223, 311, 469

Rotstan, Robert 5, 260, 262-264, 486

S

Sacred Promise Team 215, 216, 217, 414, 415, 417, 435, 484

Sagan, Dr. Carl 347, 348, 351, 425

Saint James Hotel 316, 491

Schwartz, Gary 23-24, 124, 126, 134, 151, 174, 182, 199-200, 202, 205, 213, 215, 219, 221, 224-225, 227, 235, 237-238, 247-248, 274, 276, 279, 283, 291-292, 301, 318, 332, 334, 336, 341-342, 345, 403, 430, 444, 452-453, 458, 463, 479, 484, 486, 488

Schwartz, Rhonda 2, 5, 204, 213, 214-217, 244, 271, 348, 399-400, 402, 406-407,

409-413, 418-422, 435, 449, 453, 460-461, 484, 498

science fiction 12, 24, 28, 50, 61, 63-64, 66, 74, 77, 111, 126, 130, 132, 135, 195, 198, 214, 230, 232, 251, 264, 274, 298, 315, 355, 391, 408-409, 414, 417, 448, 452, 459, 491, 494

Science Friction 317, 340

sci-fi 26, 52, 61, 159, 166, 216, 277, 278, 283, 297, 488, 494

Sci-Fi Boys 50-51, 111, 179-180, 194, 216, 223, 233, 247, 260, 272, 282, 300, 410, 495

Shermer, Dr. Michael 5, 133, 140, 263, 271, 286, 289, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 332, 333, 335, 337, 338, 340, 341, 342, 475, 491

Siegel, Dr. Jay 5, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 96, 98, 99, 104, 107, 117, 194, 279, 295, 476

sitter 167, 375, 376, 377, 378, 401, 431

Skeptic magazine 133, 140, 263, 317, 318, 320, 321, 337, 341, 342, 475

slides 187, 188, 194, 208, 259, 317, 345, 411, 473, 482

Smith, David W. 421

Smith, Susy 225, 396, 397, 414, 434

Smith, Will 447, 448

Somewhere in Time 80, 160, 201

sonogram 227

Sophia 382, 383, 384, 385, 414

Spencer, Dr. John H. 351

Spielberg, Steven 25, 276, 391, 392

spirit manipulation 220

Star Wars 3, 12, 71, 214, 495

Starry Night 111, 214, 260, 324, 409, 410-412, 420, 449, 495

Statler Hilton 27, 67

Steklis, Dieter and Netzin 5, 453, 460, 461, 464, 466, 470, 493

Stimulation Test 359, 361

Strieber, Anne 5, 199

Strieber, Whitley 5, 144, 198, 199 237, 247, 485

Syfy 101, 191, 194, 248, 254, 277, 287, 304, 308, 479, 482, 490, 494, 497

synchronicity 139, 140, 146, 147, 149, 161, 162, 163, 166, 167, 173, 174, 186, 192, 211, 214, 215, 234, 253, 258, 281, 286, 304, 315, 341, 408, 410, 413, 420, 456, 478, 485

T

Taplin, Jonathan 69

Talented Shoes 242, 486

TCNJ 96, 105, 106, 107, 114, 121

Tesla, Nicola 227, 230, 467

The Afterlife Experiments 349, 363, 373, 396, 431, 437, 439, 447, 496

The Beacon of Mind 351, 388

The Believing Brain 317, 335, 340

The Dancing Wu Li Masters 364

The Energy Healing Experiments 367, 385, 406

The G.O.D. Experiments 438, 496

The Sacred Promise 349, 381, 382, 396, 397, 400, 437, 496

Tiller, Bill 204

Time Machine 66, 74, 89, 178, 232, 241, 293, 294

Tinsley, Jeff 65, 67, 68, 307, 308

Tomer, Orit Ish Yemeni 5, 151, 238, 244, 246, 250, 375, 411, 486

Topper the Ghost 332

Transformers 45, 71, 111, 214, 346, 494

Twain, Mark 22, 173, 494

Twilight Zone 38, 166, 200, 317, 491

Type I Skeptic 224, 427, 431

Type II Skeptic 224, 252, 430, 445, 446

U

UFOs 73, 105, 126, 223, 469

V

Vampirella 152, 154, 480

van Gogh, Vincent 72, 250, 317, 409, 410, 411, 412, 420, 449, 491

Vertlieb, Steven 224

W

Wahrman, Mathilde 247

Waite, Ron 5, 272, 273, 274, 422, 487 488

Wallace, Albert Russel 341, 342

Wallace, Lew 316

War of The Worlds 66, 178, 241, 251

Warren, James 26, 52, 59, 60, 67, 68, 152, 297, 298

water-soluble 108, 116

Webber, Andrew Lloyd 233

Wells, H. G. 74

What Dreams May Come 80, 161, 199, 201

whale 221, 222, 223, 225, 230, 259, 265, 292, 484

Why People Believe Weird Things 317

Wild, Maxi 452, 461, 463

Williams, Paul 150, 199, 480

Wilson, Susanne 5, 230, 249, 273, 453, 459, 462, 463, 465, 466

wine 118, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 221, 292, 346, 419, 420, 479

Wong, Casey 207

word-play 26, 54, 75, 318

X

x-ray 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 250, 310

Y

Yale 12, 200, 348, 350, 358, 369, 370, 434, 447, 497

Yellow Hat Productions 2, 94, 214, 410, 412

You Axed for It 231

Yunt, Catherine 5, 205-206, 238-244, 249, 304, 375, 421, 453, 485-486, 492

Z

Zeus 150

Zimbabwe 83, 156, 175, 176, 183, 187, 188, 194, 208, 220, 229, 259, 317, 334, 411, 472, 473, 481, 482